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Table of flight times and destinations including Abu Dhabi, Athens, Amsterdam, etc.

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US bid for nuclear sell-off

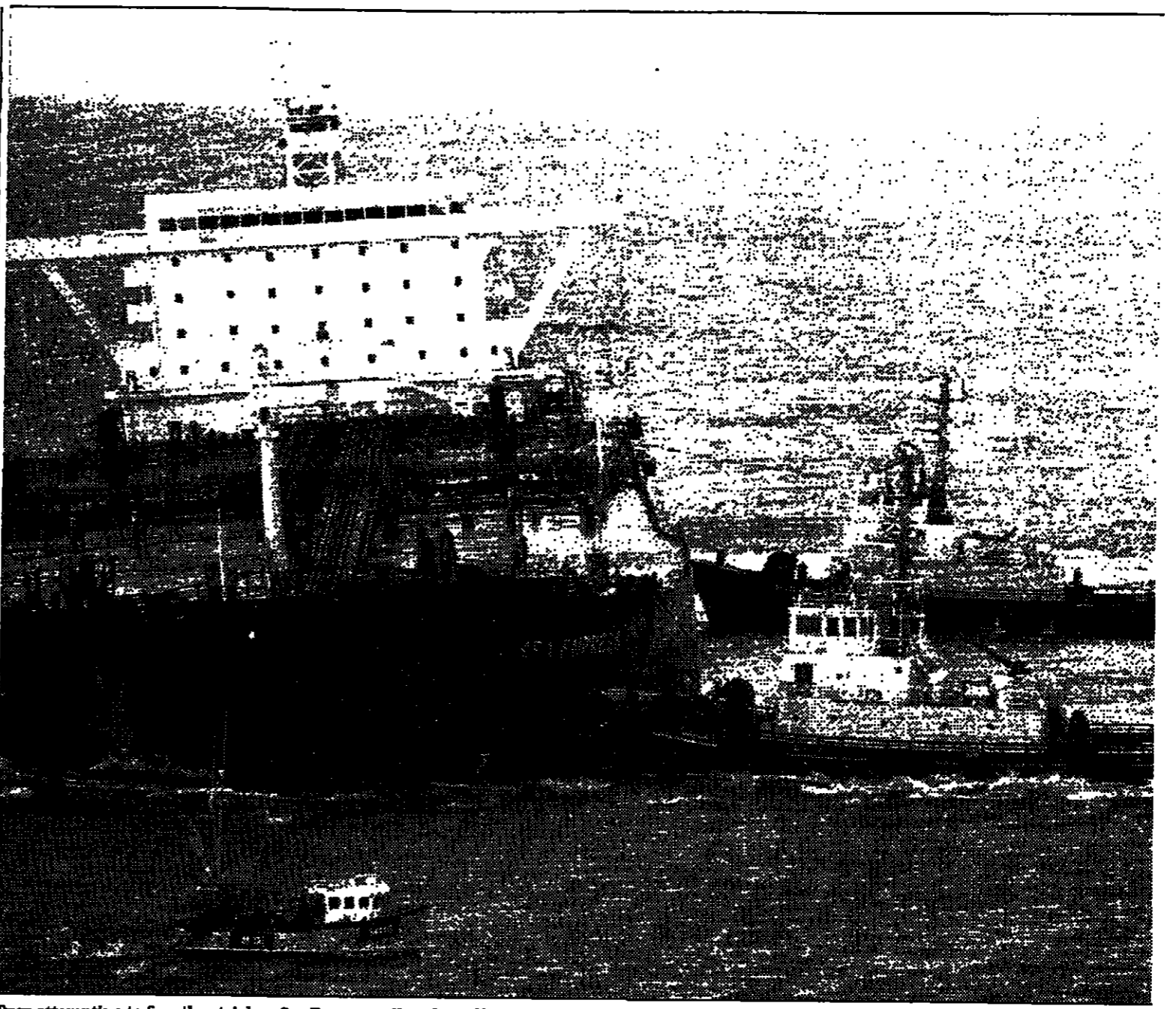
Ministers set for volte-face on £2.5bn flotation plan

Simon Beavis and Chris Barrie

THE Government is preparing to turn nuclear privatisation on its head by abandoning its plans for a £2.5 billion public flotation and opting instead for a private deal by selling the nation's most modern atomic reactors to one of America's biggest nuclear companies.

try believe that the decision on whether to pull the flotation could be taken within the next 10 days. The Department of Trade and Industry refused to comment specifically on Duke Power last night, but a spokeswoman said: "If the department were to have a serious approach, it would be taken seriously."

into the private sector. Executives are thought to be insisting that part of a £3 billion liabilities bill be left behind for taxpayers to pick up. They are insisting that if the privatised company is forced to meet the entire bill, then British Energy should be floated with little or no debt.



Tugs attempting to free the stricken Sea Empress oil tanker off St Ann's Head, Pembrokeshire, yesterday

Pembrokeshire oil spill 'up to 50,000 tonnes'

NEARLY 50,000 tonnes of crude oil may have escaped from the disintegrating supertanker Sea Empress. It emerged yesterday, as salvage experts fought to prevent an environmental catastrophe.

They were trying to refloat the vessel before it could break apart. The belated admission that as much as one third of the cargo could have leaked into the sea surrounding sensitive bird sanctuaries and wildlife reserves on the Pembrokeshire coast angered environmental campaigners and undermined the difficulties faced by the rescue operation.

As darkness fell, aircraft spraying dispersant chemicals withdrew and tugs began trying to move the Sea Empress and ground it between the main channels approaching Milford Haven. They failed to do so on last night's high tide, but were trying again early today.

the current location for much longer, there's a very high chance of her breaking up and all her cargo being lost," said Lord Goschen, the shipping and aviation minister.

Earlier Kees van Essen, Turn to page 2, column 5

Clues lead from dead bomber to IRA cache

Duncan Campbell and David Sharrock in Belfast

ANTI-TERRORIST branch officers yesterday found a cache of IRA explosives, which they believe were to be used to continue the mainland bombing campaign. It also emerged that the IRA man who died when his bomb exploded on a bus in central London on Sunday night had a number of different identities.



Brendan Woolhead... not seen as a suspect. He is believed to have spent time in Glasgow. He is understood to have had more than one identity.

cian formerly with British Telecom, he had returned to Ireland recently but had been unable to find work. "Police told us they had concluded their inquiries with regard to Brendan and he was no longer a suspect," said Mr Woolhead. "We had no reason to suspect that Brendan had any political affiliations and we were flabbergasted that he was a suspect. He was treated fairly by the police. They were just doing their job."

Resignation calls grow

Guardian ICM poll

Martin Linton and Patrick Wintour

PRESSURE on the Government over the Scott report grew yesterday after a Guardian-ICM poll disclosed that half of those surveyed think at least one minister should resign.

Scott report

From what you have heard about the Scott report, do you think any of the following ministers should resign?

dicating a degree of public confusion. Ministers will also be relieved that there is little agreement about which of them should resign. Among those who have an opinion, only one resignation — that of William Waldegrave — is demanded by a majority.

Advertisement for Direct Line Motor Insurance with text: 'Isn't it time you joined Britain's largest ever private motor insurer?' and a car illustration.

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G2

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Sketch

Responsibility? Certainly not



Simon Hoggart

I WAS sorry to read about the drunkenness, foul language and nudity at the Brit Awards ceremony. There was a time when British popular music was famous around the world for its quiet dignity and respect for the other fellow's point of view.

ing a yes-or-no answer. Not that he ever gets one. Mr Major ended his reply: "Sir Richard accepts explicitly that ministers regarded the relaxed interpretations as being a justifiable use of the flexibility believed to be inherent in the guidelines."

Labour MPs jeered at this, though I was too busy jotting it down in the Great Loose-Leaf Binder, a book which will bring pleasure and comfort if I am taken hostage in Beirut for six years.

Mr Blair tried again, and again, but got no further. Defeated, he cried: "Isn't anyone going to take responsibility?" The Conservative Government, he concluded, was "knee-deep in dishonour."

I suspect we were hearing the first in a series. Soon we will learn that they are waiting deep in dishonour, then up to their necks in dishonour, and finally will be found choking on their own dishonour, like dead rock drummers.

Mr Major accused him of "trash" and "putting with false indignation." He would admit that his two charges against the Government had been found untrue "if he had a shred of honesty himself."

Labour MPs jeered merrily at that, and my sense is that Mr Major's attempt to blame the imbrolio on the Labour Party will not work. The public does not buy it. Indeed, he may have done himself some harm.

In the past, people may have felt that Mr Major might be wet, dithering, uninspired, lacklustre, incompetent and silly. But at least they thought he was straight. His behaviour over Scott looks twisted.

George Foulkes got in the breach, "Sine qua non Waldegrave has reportedly given inaccurate and misleading information to Parliament and the public, he is the ideal man to present Tory tax plans at the next election." Even a few Tories laughed.

The trouble is that Scott is not one but two reports, woven together between the same covers. One is a chronicle of stupidity, malfeasance, and casual disregard for proper behaviour. The other is a gentlemanly benison on fellow politicians. The two are incommensurable, which is why, as with Shakespeare and the Bible, everyone can find the text they want inside.

First night

Family memoir put in context

Robin Thorner

Drive On! Belfast Lyric

DRIVE ON! is the teeth-gritted comedy of the rigid, schoolmasterly father, stricken with angina during a fishing trip to an island off Donegal, to his 21-year-old son. "I couldn't leave him in the care of the nuns," is the mother's explanation for their father's dash to the "proper" (i.e. Protestant) medicine.

with the Liverpool Everyman. His greatest success so far has been Flying Blind (1977), which emerged as one of the best plays about the Troubles, presenting a disturbing but powerful portrait of a society impotent to solve its problems, which toured around the world.

Ironically, this is the first time any of his plays has been staged in Ireland and it took an English director of the Belfast Lyric, Robin Midgley, to commission it. In his two years' tenure, the Lyric has staged 16 new works by writers like Martin Lynch and Graham Reid.

The creative energy is already returning to Belfast now that bright young people no longer feel they have to leave, as the Flying Blind generation did. Midgley's production is cunningly cast, largely from Morrison's generation at Queen's, including Willet Killey, giving a fine, knowing performance as the mother. On an atmospheric set from Stuart Marshall, it copes admirably with the difficult time shifts and delicate changes of mood from near-farce to poignancy.

John Keegan is torn between past and present as Dan, Walter McMonagle clowns superbly and movingly as the estate agent, while Sean Caffrey's body and mind-set bristle as the father, and Eleanor Methven is haunting as the lost lover.

Drive On! runs at the Belfast Lyric until March 9. Details: 01232 381081. What's wrong with the RSC? Michael Billington, Theatre, G2 pages 12 and 13

Prisoner starves to death

Geoffrey Gibbs

FATHER has starved himself to death in hospital while awaiting trial for the shotgun killing of his daughter in September last year.

Mr Cross started to refuse food on December 28 while on remand in Bristol prison and was admitted to hospital on January 5. He signed a statement requesting hospital staff not to give information about his condition.

The Home Office denied it could have prevented Mr Cross's death. "We do not have the power to force-feed people, as the High Court Family Division decided in October 1994."



Jack Charlton has sent tremors through the football world with his planned autobiography

Big Jack booked in record £.5m life story deal

Edward Pilkington

JACK CHARLTON, the footballing giant who even the Pope reveres as the Boss, has launched a new career off the pitch with a deal to write his autobiography believed to be worth half a million pounds.

Big scores

- Ian Botham, former England cricketer: Botham, My Autobiography. Reputed advance £250,000
George Graham, former Arsenal soccer manager: Arsenal and The Glory. Reputed advance £250,000
Terry Venables, England soccer manager: Venables. The Autobiography. Reputed advance £200,000
Geoff Boycott, former England cricketer: Boycott. The Autobiography. Reputed advance, £175,000

team to 46 victories in 83 games before retiring last December. Big Jack has a reputation for speaking his mind, with a temper to boot. The news that he is to tell his life story, having resisted publishers' approaches for several years, may fill some members of the footballing fraternity with dread.

Ministers 'disregarded oil warnings'

Labour MP attacks government complacency over report by Lord Donaldson that recommended bigger tugs

Rebecca Smithers, Owen Rowcott and David Fairhall

THE Labour MP for Pembroke, Nick Ainger, claimed last night that the Government was directly responsible for the massive oil spill because it had failed to implement key recommendations of the Donaldson inquiry, which would have significantly improved the availability of powerful tugs suitable for salvage operations.

been repeatedly frustrated by the forces of nature, he said. "This has been an extraordinarily difficult scenario," said Lord Gochen. "It is a very big vessel and weather conditions have been very adverse." "It wasn't realised in the first instance quite what a difficult situation it was and what forces of nature were competing with."

Infographic showing the location of the Sea Empress oil tanker, the Skomer and Skokholm islands, and the extent of the oil spill. Includes a map of the area and a diagram of the tanker's damage.

The Dirty Dozen A twelve-strong team from the Dept of Transport's Marine Pollution Control Unit are on permanent standby to deal with cases such as the Sea Empress. Based in Southampton they can call on seven DC-3 aircraft fitted with dispersant sprayers and two Cessna light aircraft fitted with the latest slick detection equipment.

Mr Ainger, who has been monitoring the crisis closely, had been told by local contacts on Monday night that the reason the Sea Empress was regularly out of control and continually running aground at the mouth of Milford Haven was because the tugs attached were not powerful enough to control her.

THE WORST fears of naturalists were realised yesterday when it emerged that the Sea Empress oil slick had surrounded the islands of Skomer and Skokholm, one of Britain's richest marine wildlife areas, writes Alex Bellis.

Both the rocky, windswept islands are of international importance for their rare and diverse species of seabirds, corals, dolphins and seals. Skokholm, the smaller island at 240 acres, is also historically significant as the home of the world's first bird observatory, which was built in 1933.

Most of the birds away from the islands, seabirds are retreating much more slowly than expected from their places of migration — as far away as Brazil. The sea around Skomer, which is three times bigger than its neighbour, is also one of three marine nature reserves in the British Isles, home to harbour porpoises, grey seals and rare species of sponge, anemone, coral and sea snails.

He had previously been reassured by the Government that it had sufficient resources to tackle the salvage operation as well as the pollution clean-up. In his report, published in May 1994 in the wake of the Braer disaster, Lord Donaldson said: "There is not sufficient salvage capacity in UK waters at the moment, nor is it coherently organised. We believe that the Government should set up a system to ensure that tugs with adequate salvage capacity are available at key points around UK shores... where adequate capacity cannot be provided in any other way the Government should arrange for the funding of the difference between what is needed and what the private sector can provide."

continued from page 1 the man in charge of the salvage attempt, said his crew working on board had heard crackings and grindings as the damaged hull strained against the rocky bottom. "We are looking for a more favourable place to beach her in a controlled way," he said.

Of 17 tanks carrying the North Sea crude oil, at least 12 are believed to have been breached, he said. The extent of the environmental damage caused by the oil was a subject of fierce debate yesterday between government officials and wildlife campaigners.

Phillips of the Dyfed Wildlife Trust said: "This is an extremely fragile area. We do not think they have the resources to control what's going on out there." The World Wildlife Fund called for a national disaster to be declared. "This is one of the three top biological sites in this country," said a spokeswoman. "No one knows the toxicity of the oil and what it's doing to the seabird."

Advertisement for Calais cruises. Text: 'Cruise to Calais in comfort... RELAX and just cruise across from Dover to Calais - the shortest sea route to France. Large, luxurious car ferries with shops, restaurants and entertainment on board, plus hovercraft, provide rapid, comfortable crossings with a departure every thirty minutes. Fast on and off loading on both sides of the Channel helps to speed your journey. Instant motorway access from Calais port provides an open door to the entire European motorway network.'

Large vertical advertisement on the right edge of the page. Text includes: 'TV's S... expos... to star...', 'Crusade seal vic... for Buck...', 'Although I concentrate the Attorney sections of civil serv...'

TV's Saudi exposé set to start row

Andrew Gull Media Correspondent

A TELEVISION documentary, which used undercover filming techniques to expose the brutal treatment of domestic servants, seems likely to create a diplomatic rift between Britain and Saudi Arabia.

Channel 4's Dispatches documentary, to be screened tonight, reveals inhuman treatment of domestics in Saudi Arabia, including rape and beatings.

The programme, which defied Saudi law by spending two years filming undercover with a crew posing as western businessmen, seems certain to offend the country's rulers and provoke a re-run of the 1980 furor over the Death of a Princess drama-documentary.

It follows Jessica Sumanga, a Filipina, who obtained a contract to work with a Saudi family.

Dispatches includes detailed descriptions from Jessica about how employers beat her, abused her, and sought sexual favours. Another Filipina tells how she was raped and later accused of stealing by her employer, which resulted in her having her arm severed on a Saudi court order.

The film, made by Carlton Productions, describes Saudi Arabia as one of the most repressive regimes in the world and questions whether important trade agreements make the British government deliberately uncritical of the regime's human rights record.

The broadcast comes at a sensitive time in relations between the two countries. Tomorrow the immigration

appeal hearing against the expulsion of the Saudi dissident Mohammed al-Masari from Britain to Dominica will begin in London.

The deportation order came after pressure from the Saudi regime and British defence companies.

In 1995, Saudi Arabia bought £1.5 billion of British goods and the 1985 al-Yamamah contract secured thousands of jobs.

A spokesman for Channel 4 said it had no qualms about the undercover filming operation. "We had concerns about the safety of our people in Saudi Arabia because the filming was very dangerous, but no concerns about the ethics. The only way of finding out what is happening in the country is by filming illicitly."

Channel 4 said it offered the Saudi embassy an opportunity to comment on the plight of Philippine migrant workers, but officials declined, citing legal advice.

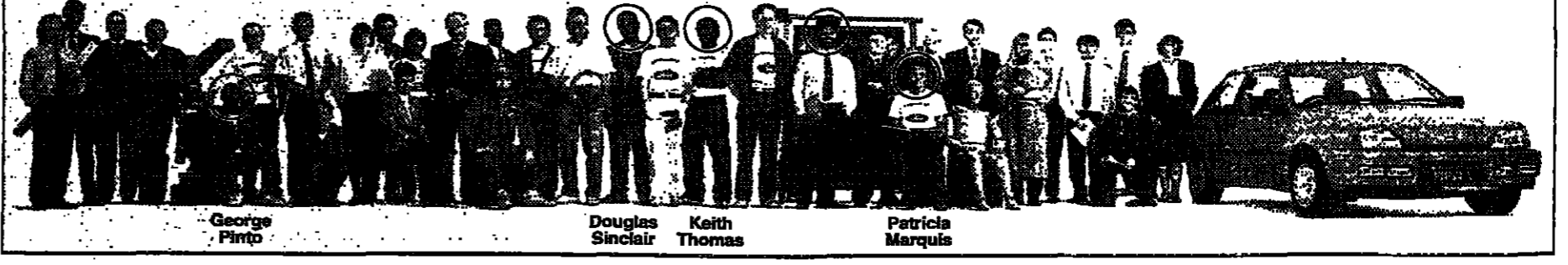
No-one was available for comment at the embassy yesterday.

Relations could be further strained if BBC1's Panorama goes ahead with a film on Saudi Arabia. A spokesman confirmed: "It is a possible subject for a future Panorama."

In 1980 ITV's Death of a Princess almost caused a break in diplomatic relations. The British ambassador was recalled from Riyadh and £200 million of exports lost. The programme dramatised the true story of a princess who had accepted Western ideas about women's rights, challenged Islam, and was executed for adultery.

At the time the Government asked broadcasters to consider possible consequences for British trade.

Everything we do is driven by you.



The original photograph as used in Ford's advertising campaign, including George Pinto, Douglas Sinclair, Keith Thomas and Patricia Marquis

Red faces at Ford as staff get £1,500 for race blunder

Ford Motor Company Limited

February 16, 1996

Dear Sir

As you are aware the Company and your Trade Union Representatives have been involved in lengthy discussions relating to the photograph used in a Ford Credit Options brochure. A thorough investigation involving the Managing Director of Ford Credit, Mr Rich Van Leeuwen and Ogilvy and Mather, Director, James Page was conducted. It was established that Ogilvy and Mather was the advertising agency responsible for the error which resulted in the provision of the wrong photograph to Ford Credit which was subsequently used in the Options brochure.

I have attached a copy of a letter from Rich Van Leeuwen which I believe gives a full account of the investigation conducted and the measures he is taking to address identified concerns. I was personally involved in the discussions and I am convinced the error which led to the use of the photograph was genuine and no racial or ethnic offence was intended.

I do however offer my sincere apology on behalf of the Company for any distress this issue may have caused you.

John Mullin on how a series of colour changes hit industrial relations at the car company

FORD was embarking on a damage limitation exercise yesterday after agreeing to pay four of its black workers £1,500 each in compensation because they had appeared in promotional material as white people. Computer technology was used to change their colour. The motor company made the payments only after losing £2.8 million when hundreds of shopfloor workers staged an unofficial three-hour stoppage over its Ford's Credit Options brochure. They threatened an all-out strike. The brochure, which features the offending photograph on its front cover, has been withdrawn from car showrooms in Britain.

The saga began five years ago when 25 shopfloor workers posed for a photograph to promote Ford's 'Everything We Do Is Driven By You' campaign. It was used all over Europe as Ford tried to emphasise the ethnic mix of its workers and their pride in the new Fiesta. But then it went sadly awry. The finger was pointed at Ogilvy & Mather, Ford's advertising agency. It doctored the photograph for use in Poland, where it was felt black faces might not go down too well. Somebody sent the doctored negatives back to Ford 18 months ago for use in the credit scheme brochure. And nobody at Ford, where the original poster of 1991 was still adorning the shopfloor, noticed the changes. Noel Sinclair, who works at the Dagenham plant, discovered the anomaly when he walked into the Dovercourt showroom in Essex to buy a car and was handed one of the brochures. Five of his colleagues from the Paints, Trimming and Assembly section having new white identities, including a Sikh, who had to be born of beard and turban as well. Douglas Sinclair, aged 56, with Ford for 30 years, a bearded black man with perfect eyesight, was transformed into a clean-shaven white man with glasses. "It was embarrassing. People started to come up to me and call me Two Face."

Patricia Marquis, aged 30, at Dagenham for eight years, had aged 20 years and turned white. She felt angry and humiliated. "They had changed my face for God's sake. What the hell did they think they were doing?" Keith Thomas, aged 40, was made to look younger, a white man of about 20 in a baseball cap. "I immediately thought it was racist. They wanted me in the picture when they wanted to show the mix of ethnic groups in Ford's workforce, but suddenly I wasn't good enough." Negotiations went on with the Transport and General Workers' Union for a fortnight. The workers, reluctantly, accepted an apology and compensation. They say race relations at Dagenham have been badly damaged. Mr Thomas told the Evening Standard in London: "It affects everyone who works at Dagenham and who is black or Asian. It's a sign of just what Ford thinks of us all, and people are angry." Ford said last night that it had an unequivocal equal opportunities policy. There had been a genuine administrative error. Van Leeuwen, managing director of Ford Credit, apologised: "There was absolutely no racial motive."

Crusade set to seal victory for Buchanan

Martha Walker in Manchester, New Hampshire

THE first primary state of New Hampshire cast its votes yesterday in what has become an election to decide whether moderate Republicans can unite to stop the surging fundamentalist crusade of Pat Buchanan.

The Anybody-But-Buchanan movement is torn between the veteran Senator Bob Dole, whose once overwhelming lead in the polls has collapsed, or Lamar Alexander, the bland former governor of Tennessee. Support for Steve Forbes, the multi-millionaire publisher, has dwindled to single figures.

Although the opinion polls are close enough to suggest a statistical dead heat between Mr Buchanan, Mr Dole and Mr Alexander, all the polls but one yesterday gave the lead to the rightwing populism of Mr Buchanan and what he calls his "peasants revolt" against the Republican establishment.

"They are in a terminal panic. They hear the shouts of the peasants coming over the hill," Mr Buchanan told his baying supporters at his last rally.

Despite television advertisements and protesters accusing him of being an extremist and Nazi sympathiser, Mr Buchanan has built on his base among the anti-abortion movement, the Christian coalition and the gun lobby with a new flood of support from blue collar workers, attracted by his demands for trade protection to save American jobs.

While Mr Dole has dropped from 55 per cent to 26 per cent in the New Hampshire polls in the past six weeks, Mr Alexander has risen from nowhere to 25 per cent in the same period. And for his eve of poll event, Mr Alexander finished the last mile of the walk across the state, which he began as a gimmick last year, reaching the sea at Portsmouth.

"However the vote comes out, you will have a weakened Senator Dole and a Pat Buchanan who can't unify our party. I'll be coming out in

the best position to be the Republican nominee," Mr Alexander said yesterday. "This election will define the Republican party as we go into the next century."

Mr Dole was counting desperately on the popular state governor, and Republican congressman and party machine to turn out the vote for him, particularly in the north and rural areas, to offset Mr Buchanan's heavy support in the city of Manchester.

"We don't have to win. We'd like to. Would feel good. Even one vote would do it," said a visibly dispirited Mr Dole at his eve of poll rally, a torchlight parade through the town of Milford, which turned out to be a damp squib, shouted down by Buchanan supporters.

Mr Dole has the campaign funds, the organisation and the support of the party leadership across the states to continue, even if defeated by Mr Buchanan in New Hampshire. But it will be hard for Mr Dole to survive a defeat by Mr Alexander. The rest of the Republican race through the primaries is already shaping up to be a damp squib, as the party elders recall the landslide defeat they suffered in 1964 with Barry Goldwater, a similar far-right conservative candidate.

"Even if he doesn't win any more primaries, Pat could do it to the Republican nominee who Jesse Jackson did to the Democrats in 1984 and 1988, distort the party's message and haul it away from the centre ground where elections are won," said Bill Kristol, a Republican strategist and former chief of staff to vice-president Dan Quayle.

To the delight of the Democrats, the New Hampshire voting rules allow much mischief. There are 252,000 registered Republicans, 210,000 registered Democrats and 200,000 independents, who can vote in either party's primary. This year, party registration can be changed at the polling station, tempting Democrats to vote for Mr Buchanan to add to Republican divisions.

Fastest vote in the West, page 6

Buy arms from Britain, Rifkind tells Slovenia

Ian Black Diplomatic Editor

IN a timely reminder of the relationship between foreign policy and arms sales, Britain has told Slovenia it should buy British and other European defence equipment if it wants to join Nato.

With the Scott report into the arms-to-Bosnia affair fresh in his mind, Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, has made a strong pitch for British arms manufacturers which want to sell to the former Yugoslavia. The market there is opening as the United Nations arms embargo is lifted under the Dayton peace accord.

Mr Rifkind, in the Slovenian capital Ljubljana on Monday at the start of a Balkan tour, convinced Janez Drnovsek, the prime minister, that he should review the award of military communications contracts worth £25 million to the Israeli company Tadiran. Slovenia has made a strong pitch for British arms manufacturers which want to sell to the former Yugoslavia. The market there is opening as the United Nations arms embargo is lifted under the Dayton peace accord.

Mr Rifkind said all bidders would be invited back to discuss their tenders. Mr Rifkind's representations — one of the main objects of his visit — came after the British embassy in Ljubljana warned last year that too narrow an interpretation of the arms embargo would prevent British companies

from winning contracts. Diplomats felt British suppliers were severely handicapped because of Whitehall's concern about the ramifications of the Scott inquiry. "Since Scott started work, Britain has become the most restrictive of all the European arms-exporting countries," said Paul Beaver of Jane's Defence Weekly.

The embargo, against all states of the former Yugoslavia, will be partially lifted next month and removed in June.

Last year a relaxation was approved for a temporary export licence for Rascal. But Slovenia doubts about whether British suppliers could deliver helped tip the balance against them. Other countries, including Israel and the US, were more flexible, supplying military equipment in civilian colours.

Britain's point is that as a prospective member of Nato, Slovenia needs equipment that matches Alliance standards. But there are clear commercial implications too. "There are always two angles," Mr Beaver said. "The military want interoperability and the politicians want to do business with them."

Foreign Office sources say Britain strongly supports Slovenia's bids to join Nato and the European Union. "Freedom day", page 7

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Although most debate in Parliament and the press has concentrated on whether Waidegrave was a knave, and the Attorney-General a proven Lyell, the most fascinating sections of Scott's epic are those in which we see just how civil servants behave when they think no one is looking.

Francis Wheen G2 page 7

booked £.5m deal

big scores

ings'



ilais with you

Move to plug care gap for mentally ill

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

UP TO 400 group homes could be built for chronically mentally ill people under plans yesterday endorsed by Stephen Dorrell, Health Secretary, to rehabilitate the care in the community programme.

The homes, each costing more than £1 million, will house an average 12 patients each and provide 24-hour nursing care. As many as 5,000 people could be accommodated.

By providing round-the-clock supervision, the homes could plug a gap at the heart of the care in the community policy and answer criticisms that potentially dangerous patients are being left on the streets.

Mr Dorrell said the homes would be preferable to asylum-style hospital care for mentally ill people unable to look after themselves.

"All professional opinion suggests that it is a better way to meet the residential care needs of those with that kind of illness... than a model of care that, while it was a great breakthrough in the 19th century, is no longer regarded as a proper way of caring for people," the minister said in the Commons.

Proposals for the homes emerged as the Department of Health admitted that almost one in three health authorities would not have comprehensive mental health services in place in 13 months even if all authorities' development plans were fully implemented.

Of 101 English authorities surveyed by the department

last autumn, 68 are officially expected to be providing acceptable services by the end of March next year. Thirty-three are not, including Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield, Avon, Hertfordshire, Cornwall and West Sussex.

Mr Dorrell said an extra £95 million would be invested in services next year, comprising £53 million planned by authorities and £42 million government funding he had announced previously.

He confirmed details of a patient's charter on mental health and announced he was seeking expert advice on the present role of health managers in discharging mental patients — a role criticised in some recent cases of patients who went on to commit attacks or killings.

The minister also sought to achieve a terminological shift. Publishing a booklet entitled *The Spectrum of Care*, Mr Dorrell said the phrase "care in the community" had "too often been taken to mean the abandonment of residential care".

The strategy for 24-hour, nursed care homes has been drawn up by an advisory group led by outside consultants. In a report, the group estimates the homes could cater for 5,000 patients currently in acute hospitals, hostels or their own homes, or unnecessarily in secure units. The homes would be funded by the NHS at a cost of £35,000-£50,000 a year per patient, including capital outlay.

Mr Dorrell has not accepted the report's recommendation to set quantified targets for development of the homes. Officials do not think the need is as high as 5,000 places.

However, the minister made plain that authorities were expected to go ahead with the idea.

"The Government accepts that facilities of this kind do have a valuable role to play in the spectrum of care and it will look to health authorities to ensure that their plans for the future provide for this need to be met," he told the Commons.

Labour said the plan for the homes was "yet again putting the cart before the horse".

Harriet Harman, shadow health secretary, said: "Any new initiative must only run in tandem with an immediate moratorium on bed closures — otherwise services will be cut and patients will fall through the net."



Star turn... Michael Jackson performs his hit Earth Song, during which Jarvis Cocker jumped on stage as a protest against Jackson's "Christlike" projection of himself

Singer hits back over Brit stage 'attack'

Angella Johnson on the aftermath of Pulp star's note of discord during performance by Michael Jackson

THE lead singer of the pop group Pulp yesterday denied attacking three children during a stage invasion while Michael Jackson was performing at the Brit Awards on Monday night.

As his agents pledged a legal battle to clear his name, the singer Jarvis Cocker said that his actions were a protest against Jackson's "Christlike" projection of himself on stage.

Cocker was arrested and questioned by police after he jumped on stage during Michael Jackson's performance of Earth Song and allegedly assaulted children taking part in the show.

Scotland Yard confirmed it was investigating allegations that an 11-year-old boy was punched, another suffered a cut ear and bruised ribs and a 12-year-old was thrown to the ground. Cocker, 32, claimed he had only protested at the

way the music industry allowed Jackson to indulge in the fantasy of portraying himself as a "Christlike figure" with the power of healing. "It was a spur of the moment decision brought on by boredom and frustration. I just ran on the stage and showed off. I didn't make any physical contact with anyone as far as I recall. I certainly didn't push anyone off stage."

The 41ns singer said he found it insulting to be accused of assaulting children. "All I was trying to do was make a point and do something that lots of other people would have loved to have done if only they'd dared."

Organisers condemned his action — which was not seen by most of the 4,000 audience — as "dangerous and irresponsible". Cocker, who allegedly made V signs at Jackson before being bundled offstage with a

companion, spent several hours at Kensington police station. He was granted police bail until March 11.

Jackson's record company, Epic, issued a statement saying the American had been "sickened, saddened, shocked, upset, cheated [and] angry" at the disruption and lack of respect from a fellow artist.

Rachael Garner, whose seven-year-old daughter Bethany was on the stage, said Cocker had caused chaos with his impromptu performance. "I saw this man come on the stage and he seemed to hesitate in front of the cameras. At first I did not realise who it was or what was going on."

"The man stood on Bethany's toe. Then the 15-year-old girl next to her apparently kicked him. The whole episode was outrageous. The children just couldn't believe what was happening. Some came off in tears and were cuddling each other."

Pulp's public relations manager Scott Piering said the group was preparing for a legal battle to clear its lead singer's name. "There were so many people in that room

last night who did not see Jarvis do anything other than take a stroll on stage that I really do not see how these charges can stand. It is patently untrue that he struck anyone."

Cocker has built a reputation for hard living and prides himself on his newly acquired bad boy image.

Before the ceremony the singer, whose group failed to win a prize, had told reporters: "Awards are a good thing if you get nominated because you go to the party, get really drunk and blow yourself up — which is always something I enjoy doing."

Pulp, which was formed by Cocker during a boring economics lesson at school in Sheffield 16 years ago, soared to success over the past 12 months after years of penniless toil. In 1995 they had three Top Ten singles — including Common People, which made number two in the charts. But another single, Sorted for E's and Whizz, provoked outrage because of its references to illegal drugs. It went on to be a massive hit along with the album *Different Class*.



Jarvis Cocker... denies attacking children in 'spur of the moment' protest brought on by boredom and frustration



Stephen Dorrell... plan for 24-hour nursing care

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Rivals plan to declare exclusive fishing zones

Tokyo and Seoul clash over islands

Kevin Rafferty in Tokyo

JAPAN and South Korea yesterday moved a step closer to confrontation over two rocky islets that both claim in the Sea of Japan.

Japan decided to declare a 200 nautical mile economic zone around its coast, setting the stage for a possible clash with both South Korea and China on the ownership of the islands. Within hours the Seoul government responded by saying it would declare its own 200-mile zone to include the islands.

The escalation in tension between the two allies has set off alarm bells in Washington, fresh from defusing a similar dispute between Greece and Turkey over ownership of an uninhabitable island in the Aegean sea. Both Japan and Korea come under the US military umbrella and between them have almost 100,000 US troops on their soil.

The latest row also comes hard on the heels of the arguments about possession of the Spratly islands, which have bedevilled international relations in south-east Asia.

The United Nations convention on the Law of the Sea allows a country to claim exclu-

sive rights to fishery and minerals in a zone of its coast.

Adding to the mood of tension yesterday, Seirouki Kajiyama, the cabinet minister responsible, said that Tokyo had no intention of excluding the disputed islands when it drew up the zone.

The two islands — Japan calls them Takeshima, the Koreans Tokdo — lie 200 miles north-west of Tokyo and 200 miles east of Seoul.

They have a land area of just 300 square yards, but they are surrounded by rich fishing grounds and potential mineral resources.

A foreign ministry spokesman in Tokyo noted that Japan and Russia had managed to conclude fishing agreements in spite of disputed claims to territory.

One unnamed Japanese politician, quoted in a Tokyo newspaper, said: "The best solution would be to blow up the rocks."

A spokesman for the Japanese prime minister, Kiichi Miyazawa, said yesterday that the dispute would be sorted out in accordance with the Convention on the Law of the Sea.

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Fastest vote in the West

Jonathan Freedland watches Dixville Notch, New Hampshire, notch up another electoral first

MIDNIGHT drew near and for a few moments they were the 22 most watched voters in the world. They stood like sentries in their voting booths — one for each of them — checking their watches and waiting for the hour to strike. Then, in a ritual they have performed every four years for decades, they filed past the single ballot box, plopped in their pink papers and let the cameras — which outnumbered the electorate by at least two to one — click and whirl until the deed was done.

It happens the same way every election. This tiny hamlet, tucked between two of

New Hampshire's pristine, snow-covered White Mountains, votes first in the state which is first in the nation. When it comes to choosing a candidate for president, Dixville Notch is a trailblazer within a trailblazer.

The result is a political rite observed by candidates, voters and press alike. Presidential wannabes make the journey, heading so far north they are where New Hampshire pricks its finger into Canada. The eager ones stay here for weeks at a time, copying up to the selectorate whose nod, they hope, will set a trend across America. Reporters interview every last citizen. In a country that makes a religion of democracy, Dixville

Notch has become one of America's holy sites.

The high priest is Neil Tilbotson, aged 57, who was first of the first to cast his vote in the opening seconds of yesterday morning. Still dapper in bow tie and country-gent corduroys, it was he who spotted the loophole in the state's election rules which gave Dixville Notch its chance 36 years ago. A New Hampshire polling station can close as soon as there is a 100 per cent turnout. With only a handful of souls to account for, it merely has to round up all the town's people in one place, throw in the absentee ballots (three this year), and the polls can close as soon as they have opened.

That took some doing yesterday. They had to send a car out for Frank Nash, aged 63, a farmer with a cane in his hand and two teeth in his head. His house burned down the other week, and Dixville was anxious he wouldn't make it. "They all want me, you know," he cackled, hobbling past the TV lights.

Old Man Nash went for Pat Buchanan — "And I don't care who knows it" — but he was in a minority of two in the Notch. The winner was Bob Dole with 11, followed by Lamar Alexander with 5. Publishing magnate Steve Forbes and Indiana senator Richard Lugar got one vote each. The village's five Democrats all nominated Bill Clinton.

The result gave a welcome start to the day for the Dole campaign. "As Dixville Notch goes, so goes New Hampshire," said Robin Dole, the

senator's daughter who had tracked up through heavy snow for the occasion. Her father had personally phoned swing voters that morning.

The hamlet has an impressive track record. Dixville Notch has picked the Republican nominee every time since 1968, and no president has made it since that year without first winning the primary in the Notch.

Still, that's not the point. "It doesn't matter who Dixville Notch votes for," said Steve Barba, who serves as returning officer. "It's that we vote." He believes the hamlet's civic seriousness sets the tone for the rest of the state — and the country.

To think that the most powerful nation of all time is able to have such confidence in 25 of its citizens," he says. "I find it a very awesome moment."

Currency run highlights fears over Mandela heir

David Barrowford in Johannesburg

A SECURITY guard's mishap which sparked the worst run on the rand in history has left South African investors planning the apparent thinness of the veneer that is the country's political success story.

The currency was struggling to maintain its equilibrium after three days of panic on the money market apparently triggered by the shooting of an ambulet with flashing lights outside President Nelson Mandela's Cape Town office last Friday.

It transpired that the ambulance was called to the assistance of a security official who had slipped on a stair and injured himself. But, despite personal assurances from the presidency that Mr Mandela was alive and well, the shock waves from the sighting sent the rand plummeting on Monday, and were still being felt when the markets closed last night.

The run, which precipitated a false alarm, appears to have been sustained by several factors. These included speculation about government plans to lift exchange control restrictions, and perceptions that the rand was over-valued.

Foreign investors have, in effect, now answered the central question of South African politics. What happens when Mandela goes?

The financial publication, Business Day, yesterday blamed the pessimism on the lacklustre performance of the heir-apparent, Thabo Mbeki. Mr Mandela's "troubleshooter" who has displayed a talent for shouting himself into a black hole, and in the foot whenever he has attended upon national crises.

But the Johannesburg Star cocked a snoot at foreign perceptions, advising local investors to buy "hard, fast and strong" when Mr Mandela does so, to cash in on the ignorance of a world which believed "one man's passing heralds collapse".

'Green gold' splits new South Africa

Roger Omond died last week after a long illness. This was his final report, filed from the eastern Cape

IN THE beautiful but impoverished hills of eastern Pondoland, they call it green gold. The law, a hangover from the apartheid era, forbids anybody to grow, sell or consume it. But arguably, its illegal cultivation has more virtues than vices.

It is what South Africans call dagga and the rest of the world knows as cannabis or marijuana. It has been a part of traditional Xhosa life for centuries — although this did not stop the architects of apartheid from imposing harsh penalties for even minimal possession.

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recently, I was offered dagga as nonchalantly as a glass of wine.

Yet arrests are reported almost daily. In 1992 police seized 4.8 million kilograms of dagga, with a street value of one rand (8p) a gram. Only about 10 per cent is confiscated, meaning the total crop is worth 48 billion rand (28.4 billion), twice the contribution made to South Africa's GNP by farming, forestry and fishing, according to one estimate.

The trade keeps large numbers of people in work and off the unemployment figure of about 40 per cent. They include growers, runners who brave the police roadblocks, packagers and dealers.

One view also is that the profitability of the green gold keeps thousands of people from migrating to already over-crowded cities.

A spokesman for the growers said late last year: "The economy of the local towns depends on the revenue derived from the rural villagers, which they get from trading in green gold." An acre of dagga plants can yield 2 million rand (237,000) a month — huge money for the densely populated, peasant-run area around Port St Johns.

But there is a downside. Guns are now currency in Pondoland as well as Soweto: AK-47s, Uzis and R-5s are bartered for dagga and the villagers use them to protect their crops during the two-month drying period, when it is most vulnerable to theft or police confiscation. Inevitably, the availability of guns results in violence.

Legalisation of dagga may be some way off: social welfare and drug agencies are more cautious than the libertarians left. But to the Pondoland peasants, as well as to the middle-aged white women pigging over a pipe on their summer holidays, dagga has lost its edge of fear.

Yesterday a private sector delegation headed by the president of the Flower Growers' Association Maria Isabel Patino, flew to the US to persuade Washington to recognise the Colombian government's achievements in combating drug trafficking.

Yet these business leaders have also been calling on Ernesto Samper, Colombia's president, to consider temporarily leaving office until cleared of personal involvement in narcotics corruption.

The reason for this apparently two-faced attitude is a 1986 law that requires the White House to certify that certain countries — deemed key producers or trans-shipment points for drugs entering the US — are making sufficient efforts to combat the traffic.

Decertification brings an automatic cut in bilateral aid and requires the US to vote against fresh loans for the country in financial institutions like the World Bank.

But the aspect of the law that causes flower growers to break out in a cold sweat is the power the president has to revoke trade privileges — at a stroke raising import tariffs from zero to 8 per cent.

Last year President Clinton decertified Colombia but invoked a clause allowing him to suspend sanctions on "national security" grounds.



Shi'ite Muslim women mourn the death of their relative Mohammed Redha Mansoor at the cemetery in the village of Bani Jamrah, outside the capital, Manama, yesterday. The Bahraini opposition claims he was killed by police during street clashes. Police with armoured personnel carriers raided Bani Jamrah and arrested 20 people yesterday, the first day of the Muslim feast of Eid al-Fitr. PHOTOGRAPH: MOHAMED B. OUKHAYMA

Cocaine has flower growers in cold sweat

Phil Gunson in Bogotá reports on how drug trafficking is threatening a lucrative legal export

COLOMBIA'S flower growers are worried. The 300 tons of roses, carnations and chrysanthemums they daily ship to the United States from greenhouses around Bogotá are in danger of being priced out of the billion-dollar market they dominate. And all because of a product for which the country is rather better known — cocaine.

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Last year President Clinton decertified Colombia but invoked a clause allowing him to suspend sanctions on "national security" grounds.

In 1995, under US pressure, Colombia jalled all but one of the leading members of the Cali cartel — allegedly responsible for 80 per cent of the cocaine shipped to the US. Bogotá also claims to have eradicated 30,000 hectares of coca bushes and opium poppies.

It should have been enough. But last month, outside the period officially covered by this year's certification, the cartel's Number Three bribed his way out of jail.

Then Fernando Botero, the former defence minister who is awaiting trial for allegedly accepting the cartel's money for Mr Samper's presidential campaign, said Mr Samper

peak periods, such as Valentine's Day — carry refrigerated containers of cut flowers from Bogotá's El Dorado airport to wholesalers in the US.

Since 1987, when cocaine was discovered in some containers, each bears a supposedly tamper-proof metal seal with a number, and the transfer from lorry to refrigerated warehouse is filmed by security cameras.

A rose cut in the morning by one of the industry's 75,000 workers in the Sabana belt around the Colombian capital may find its way into a bouquet for somebody's sweetheart in Florida that evening.

Last year, Colombian flower exports to the US were worth over \$400 million (230 million). Only coffee and oil are more important.

The producers argue that trade sanctions would achieve the opposite of the effect sought by Washington. Dr Orozco said: "The flower industry constitutes a security cordon around the capital because it provides legitimate employment and isolates the Sabana from the violence in the rest of the country."

Many observers, including foreign diplomats, agree that decertification would be counter-productive. But this is a US election year and the president is under strong pressure from Republicans, like Robert Dole and Jesse Helms, and even from hardliners in his own camp, to deny Colombia a passing grade.

A lawyer responsible for investigating abuses by state security police was gunned down with her husband on a street in Bogotá, police said yesterday.

Clara Valencia and Hugo Roberto Ojalosa died after two gunmen on motorcycles riddled their four-wheeled drive vehicle with automatic gunfire on Monday evening. The assailants disappeared in traffic and were not identified, police said.

Valencia was in the Colombian attorney-general's office responsible for investigating corruption and human rights abuses by police.

Ukraine state-owned factory 'selling aircraft to smugglers'

William Rempel and Craig Pyse in Kiev

THE Ukrainian government, through its state-owned aircraft factory, is doing business with the Colombian cocaine cartels, according to US anti-drug officials as "the ultimate smugglers' plane", have been employed along drug routes from Colombia, Peru, Panama and Mexico, according to US and Colombian law enforcement officials and former partners in the Ukrainian ventures.

The Antonov aviation factory, which operates under Ukraine's ministry of machine building and defence conversion, retains legal ownership of at least six of about a dozen Antonovs known to be operating in Colombia, and stands to profit from what appear to be continuing business arrangements with traffickers. "It would be like NASA selling rockets to drug lords," said an American familiar with the Ukrainian transactions.

The US has privately warned Ukraine that drug

runners are acquiring its planes and has urged Kiev to "be very careful whom you sell them to", a senior Clinton administration official said. Despite the warnings, American sources say there are few signs of action by Ukraine to reverse the deals. At least six new sales were still pending last month, a Colombian aircraft broker involved in the transactions said. The planes are flown by experienced Ukrainian and Russian pilots, who also assist in training local flight crews.

US officials say they are unsure how many Antonovs are operating in Colombia either in legitimate or illicit trades. Colombian aviation records show nine are registered, but Colombian national police say they have spotted at least 12. Canadian airport authorities documented the transit of 20 Antonovs last year alone.

Yuri Serheyev, a spokesman for the Ukrainian foreign ministry, did not dispute that Ukrainian-made planes were flying in Latin America. But he rejected any suggestion the planes were being sold to criminals. "The government is not involved in deals with drug traffickers," he said. — Los Angeles Times.

News in brief

Black pupils in SA clashes

Black pupils rampaged through Trompsburg after they were chased away from the school by a group of white men. — Reuter.

Nigeria 'attack'

Cameroon said yesterday that Nigerian troops had resumed attacks on its positions in the disputed Bakassi peninsula, where troops on both sides died in clashes earlier this month. The two sides had previously agreed to stop fighting. — Reuter.

Minister quits

The Indian civil supplies minister, Balm Singh, resigned from the cabinet yesterday following reports linking him to an £12 million bribery scandal. United News of India said. — Reuter.

Policeman held

Police in Berlin arrested one of their own officers for armed robbery after a colleague recognised his face on a wanted poster, justice officials said. — Reuter.

Frozen to death

A young woman was found frozen to death near Lille, northern France, yesterday as

black pupils rampaged through Trompsburg after they were chased away from the school by a group of white men. — Reuter.

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Prostitution is just a sideline for Hannon. Most of the time he is a lecturer at Toronto's Ryerson University.

Jonathan Freedland

G2 cover story

Capitalism p...

in brief

Star emir foils father's attempt to regain power

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Handwritten signature or scribble at the bottom of the page.

The ugly ghosts of Croatia's past retain their grip on the partitioned city despite the Bosnia peace agreements, writes Julian Borger

'Freedom day' turns sour for Mostar

LIKE so many Bosnian agreements, it promised much. The checkpoints in the partitioned city of Mostar would open at noon yesterday. Muslims and Croats would mingle freely in the street while a multi-ethnic police force looked on benignly. But then Hitler showed up.

A Croat in a rubber Hitler mask, to be exact. But for the few dozen Muslims venturing into the notoriously chauvinist western sector of the city in the pouring rain, the effect was just as terrifying.

"Did you see that? Did you see Hitler?" asked Jasmin, aged 21, a Muslim from east Mostar who had been one of the first to cross the checkpoint where he had fought for more than a year. "Now you understand why we are so scared."

The Croat Fibbrar mingled in the crowd accompanied by a man in a white mask and the blue beret of the European Union police monitors.

"We're just here to see what's going on," said Hitler. He refused to give his real name. He said the mask was for the day's carnival, but he was a long way from the party. At the Mostar checkpoint, it was a vivid reminder of the Croats' wartime alliance with the Nazis.

As agreed at the Balkan summit in Rome on Sunday, the Croat police started allowing Muslim pedestrians to cross the checkpoint. For the first time since Mostar's Croats and Muslims began an intractable conflict in 1993, Muslim men were also allowed across.

Jasmin had come to see his

A shot was fired. Croats chased the Lada. The panicky driver crashed

old house. His friend Samir, aged 24, wanted to visit his sister and her Croat husband.

"Our hearts were leading our heads," Jasmin admitted. Fifty yards and 10 minutes into Croat territory, they were regretting their bravado. The atmosphere was turning ugly. The police, Hitler, the mock European, and some Croat bystanders began to spit out earthy insults.

There were supposed to be joint patrols of local Muslim and Croat police, accompanied by European police monitors. But the Croat contingent had failed to show up.

The patrols were postponed, and the checkpoint, 150 yards from the bridge, was dangerously exposed.

The spark came a few minutes later. A white Lada car with east Mostar registration plates crossed the line, creating uproar among the Croats. Their definition of freedom of movement appeared not to embrace cars.

A shot was fired. Some Croats chased the Lada. The driver panicked and crashed. Two of the Muslims in the car tried to run back to the checkpoint. One was caught and beaten. The second man fell on his face a few feet short of the line, but managed to struggle across.

Two other Muslims in the car were arrested by the Croat police, prompting angry Muslims to gather near

Some Muslims claimed to have seen snipers in a nearby school

the scene. At mid-afternoon, they raised a banner with a green crescent and scuffled with their own policemen who attempted to take it down. Some Muslims claimed to have seen Croat snipers in the ruins of a nearby school.

Thus passed the first day of reconciliation and freedom of movement in Mostar. By 5pm, the Croatian police finally turned up at the EU headquarters in the city and the joint patrols went on the streets at 5pm.

For most Mostar civilians it was too late. By nightfall, the Croat checkpoints were still being manned. Men of military age were being turned back. It was back to the status quo before the weekend meeting in Rome.

For the EU administrator, Hans Koschnick, however, it was good enough. At a press conference yesterday, Mr Koschnick — a German farmer mayor who has been trying to reunify the city since July 1994 — announced that some freedom of movement had been restored, his police were on the streets, better late than never.

He conceded that the first day had been less than perfect, but argued: "After two years of war — a civil war — I'm afraid that things will happen here and there that will not be in support of the peace process."

Jasmin and Samir had been to visit their relatives in joint patrols of local Muslim and Croat police, accompanied by European police monitors. But the Croat contingent had failed to show up.

The patrols were postponed, and the checkpoint, 150 yards from the bridge, was dangerously exposed.



Old hate... A Bosnian Croat in a Hitler mask gives a Nazi salute after Croats attacked a car of Muslims in Mostar and chased and beat its occupants (below) PHOTOGRAPHS: DIMITR MESSIAS

Reconstruction threatened as donors fail to pay up

John Palmer in Brussels

THE international aid operation to rebuild Bosnia's war-shattered economy is being threatened by the failure of donor countries to provide the promised cash.

Among the main world powers, only the European Union has paid its share of an agreed first instalment of \$300 million to allow work to begin on restoring hospitals, schools and the devastated economic infrastructure.

As a result of the continuing deadlock between the White House and Congress over the deficit, the United States has even failed to provide its share of the funding for the peace mission in Bosnia headed by the former Swedish prime minister, Carl Bildt. The World Bank has also not yet paid a promised \$100 million, while contributions from Japan and a number of Islamic countries have not materialised.

Mr Bildt warned in Sarajevo that the peace and aid mission would "risk a crisis without the money". In Brussels, senior European Commission officials confirmed that the bulk of the promised international donations had not been paid, even though decisions on the next stage of the \$2.5 billion four-year aid operation are due in April.

The first phase of the aid operation this winter was intended to focus on rebuilding hospitals and schools and restoring water and power supplies and telecommunications. "We must have that work in hand before we can really begin on the more ambitious stages," a Commission official said.

One problem delaying the World Bank finance is what shares of the debt of former Yugoslavia should be borne by Bosnia. EU officials are trying to persuade the main donor countries to pay their promised share of the aid into a separate trust fund to be held by the World Bank.

During the war, 80 per cent of Bosnia's power-generating capacity was destroyed and two-thirds of all homes were damaged. EU officials warn that without urgent action to restore the infrastructure, it will be almost impossible to attract international investment.



Capitalism pushes Stalin's maestro on to centre stage Sons-in-law go back to Saddam

Alexandra Stanley in Moscow

STALIN'S last surviving apparition has made a triumphant return to the Kremlin. Tikhon Khrennikov, aged 82, a composer who in his 40 years at the head of the Soviet Composers Union was best known for stifling the great composers Shostakovich and Prokofiev, did not fade away after communism collapsed.

Instead, the grandiose music he created for a new ballet, Napoleon Bonaparte, is being performed to sell-out crowds at the 6,000-

seat Kremlin Palace of Congresses, under the sponsorship of York International, an American manufacturer of air-conditioning and heating equipment.

In one of the stranger twists of Russian life, some of the greatest dissident artists and writers to have survived the Soviet period, including Alexander Solzhenitsyn, are ignored and even mocked in their newly democratic homeland, while some of the party faithful they struggled against are serenely reaping the rewards of the unexamined life.

And few defy the odds of history more than Khrennikov, who faithfully carried out the policy of artistic repression and control established in Stalin's time, and is now seeing his works performed thanks to his career denouncing.

He is unrepentant about his past and bountiful about his future. "I was buried in paperwork, speeches," he said of the job handpicked for him by Stalin, which he held on to until the Soviet Union, and the Composers Union, collapsed in 1991.

His latest work, a lavish, staidly classical ballet that chronicles the rise and fall of Russia's greatest enemy, Napoleon, is being performed by the Kremlin Ballet in a vast concert hall built under Khrushchev, its walls still encrusted with the Soviet hammer and sickle. Khrennikov devoted much of his life to keeping Soviet music free of the taint of jazz, "formalism" and avant-garde atonality, and the sweeping orchestral music he composed reflects it.

Although he composed hundreds of works, ranging from folk music to movie scores, symphonies and operas, Khrennikov is more likely to go down in history for his 1948 speech attacking the works of Shostakovich, Prokofiev and other

important Russian composers that set the tone for Soviet censure and oppression for decades.

Khrennikov now says he did not write the speech; that it was thrust into his hands a few hours before he was due to speak.

Khrennikov, who still despises jazz, says he did what he could behind the scenes to help his fellow composers. "Nobody could say no to Stalin," he explained, pulling a finger across his neck to mimic the slitting of a throat. And he asserts that it was he who after Stalin's death, pushed Soviet authorities in 1958 to rescind the party's 1948 resolution condemning such artists as Shostakovich. "My conscience is clear."

This is not a view universally shared. The renowned socialist realist Rostropovich, who fled the Soviet Union in 1974, now returns fairly frequently to Russia to perform, and extends his blessings on the demise of communism. Khrennikov does not attend his concerts.

"We were friends once," Khrennikov said. "Some people even say I helped him make his career. I have nothing against him, but we stay in our homes now." — New York Times.

David Hirst in Beirut

THE two sons-in-law of President Saddam Hussein who defected to Jordan six months ago returned to Baghdad yesterday with their wives. Their repentance goes a long way to repair the immense damage which their sensational flight dealt to his prestige and — it seemed at the time — to his grip on power.

The Jordanian prime minister said General Hussein Kamal al-Majid, former architect of Iraq's unconventional weapons programme, and his brother Saddam Kamal al-Majid, former commander of President Saddam's praetorian guard, took their decision by free choice after conducting private contacts with Baghdad.

The two brothers and their families, accompanied by the Iraqi ambassador to Jordan, crossed the border into Iraq yesterday in a fleet of limousines provided by King Hussein. Baghdad announced that both defectors had been pardoned and would be treated as ordinary citizens.

UN talks have been inconclusively adjourned.

But the real reason for Hussein Kamal's repentance is doubtless that, after revealing all he knew about Iraq's weapons programme and its deception of UN disarmament inspectors, he was of no further use to US or Arab sponsors or the Iraqi opposition.

King Hussein at first hailed him as a great patriot. He is stepping up his campaign to bring about a "democratic" Iraq, and last week permitted a new Iraqi opposition group to set up shop in Amman; but Hussein Kamal, while continuing to occupy one of his places, clearly no longer figured in his plans.

After an initial interest, the diverse Iraqi opposition groups spurned his overtures, partly because they doubted his usefulness, but mainly because he is simply too disreputable. The Iraqi National Congress, the Kurdistan- and London-based coalition, put him fifth on its list of people who should face trial for crimes against humanity.

The episode is a great boost to President Saddam's own morale. No episode can have shaken it like the desertion of his daughters. While the official media inveighed against Hussein Kamal, the daughters were always unmentionable.

News in brief

Qatar emir foils father's attempt to regain power

ALMOST 100 people, some of them junior army officers, have been arrested in Qatar following an attempt to overthrow the emirate's new emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa, writes Kathy Evans.

The coup was instigated by the former emir, Sheikh Khalifa, well-informed sources in Doha said last night. Sheikh Khalifa was overthrown in a bloodless coup last June by his son, but has vowed to return as emir.

The conspirators were said to be low ranking bedouin soldiers who had assembled on the outskirts of the city in preparation for the coup. An undisclosed number fled to neighbouring states, the sources said.

Senior officials in Sheikh Hamad's administration said Qatar intended to call for an emergency meeting of foreign ministers of the Gulf Co-operation Council states.

Officials of Sheikh Khalifa, who now lives in Abu Dhabi, but retains large amounts of Qatar's reserves, denied involvement in the coup.

Oklahoma blast trial moved

AFEDERAL judge said yesterday the trial of Oklahoma City bombing suspects Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols would be moved to Denver.

The trial was to have been held in Lawton, Oklahoma, but US district judge Richard Matsch said he would move it to Denver because Mr McVeigh and Mr Nichols could not get a fair trial in Oklahoma.

Judge Matsch said: "The effects of the explosion on Oklahoma are so profound and pervasive that no detailed discussion of the evidence [for change of venue] is necessary."

He did not say when the trial would be held.

Mr McVeigh and Mr Nichols are accused of blowing up the Alfred P. Murrah federal building in Oklahoma City last April 19, killing 169 people.

In Washington, the attorney-general, Janet Reno, said the government believed a fair trial could have been obtained in Oklahoma. — Renter.

Germans talk to abductors

TWO Germans who have offered to exchange themselves for four Western hostages held by Kashmiri separatists in Srinagar, India, said the rebels contacted them yesterday and told them to await instructions.

It was not possible to confirm their claim that Al-Faran had called them. A diplomat at the German embassy in New Delhi said the German government does not support their mission.

The Germans, Baron von Zechinsky and Jürgen Sick, travelled to Kashmir to win the freedom of four tourists — a German, two Britons and an American — whom Al-Faran kidnapped in July.

Al-Faran has demanded that India free 15 jailed Kashmiri rebels, but it refuses. Efforts by Indian negotiators and diplomats at the German, US and British embassies to negotiate the captives' release have failed.

The two Germans appealed to Al-Faran in a front-page article in the Daily Aftab, a leading Urdu-language newspaper in Srinagar. — AP.

Ruling party hopes to cash in on Nastase advantage

Chris Stephen in Bucharest

ROMANIA'S former tennis star Ilie Nastase has joined the scandal-ridden ruling party as it prepares to contest elections.

Party officials hope the inclusion of the country's leading celebrity will shore up the crumbling image of the governing Social Democrats, the former communists.

Mr Nastase is standing for mayor of Bucharest in local elections in May. These are seen as a barometer for parliamentary polls in the autumn.

After six years in office, the government has failed to revive a broken economy. Privatisation has been delayed and foreign investment remains low.

But sleaze has become the key issue. While poverty remains the norm, a small elite is making a fortune through export businesses. The extravagant lifestyles of the rich anger Romanians, who claim they owe their success to old communist party connections.

Romania's police chief, Ion Pitulescu, resigned last week claiming judges and officials

take huge bribes to allow convicted mafia barons to go free.

Corruption permeates the system: students complain they have to pay bribes of cigarettes, whiskey or cheese to ensure good marks.

The European Union unveiled the Civil Society Foundation this month, a project to promote higher standards in public life. But a board member had to resign when it emerged he was married to the foundation's manager.

The Social Democrats' coalition with the far-right nationalist parties almost collapsed earlier this year and is again in trouble. The government has reacted to its growing unpopularity by passing a raft of tough legislation.

Romanians face seven years in jail if they label the president, and will soon have to register with police if foreigners stay in their homes. The criminal code even makes it illegal to display a non-Romanian flag in a public place.

Enter Mr Nastase. Critics say he has joined the ruling party in return for business favours, but the 49-year-old claims higher motives: "People need somebody who doesn't have an interest," he says.

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DISCUSSANT:
ZACK ELEFTHERIOU
Saturday 2 March 1996
The Great Hall, 10am - 1pm
GOLDSMITHS COLLEGE
New Cross, London SE14 6NW
Tickets £15 available from Dr Teresa Adams, Goldsmiths College, Tel: 0171 919 7206/7226/7228.

Scott's real message

Waldegrave and Lyell must both resign

WHEN the Scott report was published last week we initially reserved our judgment. We did so because, like everyone else outside the governmental loop, we had not been allowed time to read the report. We had opposed the arms sales policy which was the root cause of the Scott inquiry, and we were suspicious of the Government's attempt to bounce the nation into instant conclusions favourable to its own version of events. But we needed to know more before making up our own mind. We were not the only ones. Opinion polls, including those which we report this morning, show that many people are still uncertain about the issues.

Anyone who has now read the report — really read the report, that is, and not just dipped into the more celebrated paragraphs — will know that Scott tells a long and logical story. The essence of it is that the British government always wanted our exporters to have a bigger role in the arming of Saddam Hussein's Iraq than it was generally prepared to admit. This was true while the Iran-Iraq war was going on. It became even more true after the 1988 ceasefire when Saddam needed to rebuild his military capability while the world was waking up to his treatment of the Kurds. And it reached a crisis after he invaded Kuwait and found himself at war with Britain and its allies. The contours of British government commitment over exports to Iraq rose and fell according to circumstances as did interdepartmental unity on policy across Whitehall. But its essential momentum was consistent. The policy was like a river. There were eddies and cross-currents, backwaters and side channels. But the river always flowed on.

The essential political question in the report is whether ministers played the roles which they should have played in this inevitably changing process. Nobody reading the report can seriously

believe that they did. The most reckless were those, including Alan Clark and the Department of Trade, who always pressed for sales to Iraq and who, particularly in Clark's case, were happy to dissemble in the cause. But Scott also paints a picture, familiar from many other closed political systems, of middle-ranking ministers and career officials from all the principal ministries who simply slotted into a system. This system had the habit of telling as little as was necessary to the public about subjects which it deemed politically sensitive. The striking thing about William Waldegrave is that in case after case he always seemed to opt for the more obfuscatory course rather than the more open one. Nicholas Lyell's serious failings, by contrast, are more a matter of plain incompetence in a job requiring the authority and reliability which his conduct manifestly lacked. Both have been weighed in the balance and found wanting. They should now go.

The Scott report's ultimate theme is that golden thread of English jurisprudence and English moral philosophy, the personal responsibility of a human being for his or her own actions. This is something which Conservatives have always demanded from citizens, but which they now seem content to ignore in their own conduct in government. It is a terrible thought that no one in the entire system accepts any responsibility whatsoever for anything in the story which the report tells at such length. Yet this is the position which the Government, solely for reasons of its own political survival, is now clearly determined to defend. If the whole tale was not a scandal in the first place, it has become one now. Scott has told us a story with a beginning and a middle. It is now up to the rest of us, and Parliament in particular, to supply the ending which his report demands.

Spilling oil on troubled waters

The Government must act quickly to avoid future disasters

FOR EVERY TORREY Canyon, Exxon Valdez and Braer, there are many more near misses. Luck as well as last minute rescue operations prevent even worse pollution from the world's oil tankers. It is still unclear how much damage the Sea Empress which ran aground off Milford Haven will have caused but it is already clear that luck is not on the salvagers' side. Only 2,000 tons escaped before the initial refloating; but had weather cancelled out the benefits of their speedy reaction. It now looks as though one third of the cargo of 13,000 tonnes of North Sea crude oil has escaped — already half the spillage of the Braer off the Shetland Islands three years ago. Environmentalists are sometimes accused of sounding alarms too early: this is their ample justification.

The grounding of the Sea Empress reopens the sea pollution debate and not before time. The accident has occurred at one of Europe's most fragile ecological areas with two offshore islands already being European-designated nature reserves and much of the sea area having been proposed as a marine special area of conservation — the highest European conservation status.

In the conflicting demands of energy and environmental protection be resolved? Some progress has been made since the sinking of the Braer. Lord Donaldson's inquiry into that disaster produced a hundred recommendations most of which were accepted by minis-

ters. They included tighter port inspections, publication of lists of ships which fell short of requirements, the identification and tracking of vessels by radio, and power to act against foreign ships up to 200 miles from shore. Since July 1993 all new tankers have to be built with double hulls and existing tankers modified but only after 30 years service — which means single hulls will be with us until 2023. The benefits of dual hulls could not have been better demonstrated than in the two recent groundings at Milford Haven. Four months ago the Norwegian-registered Borge, which unlike the Sea Empress did have a dual hull, also ran aground but lost no oil.

It is time now to marry two separate proposals. Donaldson suggested creating marine environmental high risk areas where masters would have to exercise particular care — one of 13 proposals ministers left for further consideration. Not only should this idea be embraced but it should be strengthened by a requirement that only dual hull ships be allowed to pass through such areas. It is time too to reconsider the leisurely timetable set out for the modification of existing tankers. Cost will be pleaded as a reason for proceeding slowly. The same plea was made in the argument over installation of car deck bulkheads in roll-on roll-off ferries. In that case governments are being forced to move with public opinion: they should do so again. The consequences of an accident are much too severe to rely on chance and a favourable wind.

Goodbye care in the community

But the new-look "spectrum of care" needs careful monitoring

THE GOVERNMENT has acknowledged the failure of Care in the Community by abandoning a policy associated with the emptying of mental hospitals before providing an alternative. Secretary for Health Stephen Dorrell now admits it is no longer helpful to speak of care in the community and that what is needed was a "spectrum of care" ranging from hospital beds for some to community support for others backed by a (welcome) Patients' Charter and (as previously announced) supervised discharges from hospital. It is difficult to find the right balance between wrongful incarceration and premature release, as a spate of recent tragedies will attest. The Government has accepted the problem by planning 400 new units in the community for 5,000 new beds nursed 24 hours a day.

Mr Dorrell is making an extra £93 million announced in the budget available to health authorities to deliver

improvements — an overdue move. A government survey finds that one in three health authorities is failing to provide proper care for former psychiatric patients living in the community. The new funds (flagged in the budget) will fill in some of the cracks. The most interesting initiative is the supervised discharges, under which 3,000 patients at risk will be released under supervision and under threat of arrest by their supervisors if they fail to take their medication. This is certainly worth trying, but could easily be scuppered by a lack of qualified people to deliver the policy, by the reluctance of the supervisors to use their powers of arrest and by Not in My Back Yard hostility among local residents to the location of these 400 sites. Mr Dorrell's heart is in the right place but he must make doubly sure that the new units are up and running before yet more mental hospitals are auctioned to the highest bidder.



Letters to the Editor

As murky waves break over Wales

Darius Guppy's story (at no cost)

THERE are many important lessons to be learnt from the stricken Sea Empress (Disaster alert after oil spill, February 17) which must inform future government policy on ship safety. Firstly, government cuts in marine safety agencies are leaving vital safety-protection services understaffed and this was the case at Milford Haven.

As two scientists who often sail through Milford Haven where the Sea Empress is aground, may we say that this disaster was inevitable. Such huge super-tankers carry so much momentum that they require several miles to come to rest. Therefore, as they come in past St Anne's Head, they have to be moving so slowly that they can easily fall victim to the very strong local tides. A system that can go wrong faster than it can be corrected is in a fundamentally unstable state: viz a driver whose reactions are slowed by drink. When one of these monsters approaches, all other vessels must scatter, knowing that its course cannot be changed in an emergency.

The potential for ecological disaster in Pembrokeshire is all the worse because, in addition to their effects on marine life, the oil and detergents will be washing ashore on the twice-daily tidal stream to suffocate the whole ecosystem of the Cleddau River, presently one of the most unspoiled regions of Europe.

Some decisions, and who will pay the (incalculable) costs of cleaning up? There has to be an open inquiry not just into this incident, but into the whole practice of using giant, uncontrollable vessels to transport mountains of oil to save mole-hills of money. The Houghton Committee has recommended a steep increase in the price of fuel to save the atmosphere; a few pennies more to save the Earth and the sea doesn't seem altogether fanciful. (Prof) Mike Disney, Dept of Physics and Astronomy, University of Wales, PO Box 821, Cardiff CF1 3XQ. Mathias Disney, Remote Sensing Unit, University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6JJ.

I WAS surprised and amused to read Piers Morgan's comments about the Daily Mail's "hypocrisy" in an article appropriately entitled "Extracts of Truth" (Media, February 19). Morgan berates the Mail for criticising the Mirror for entering into a contract with me to publish my story upon my release from prison. In view of the Mail's deal with Nick Leeson, this snafu of hypocrisy, he pontificated; but who is the real hypocrite?

Morgan knew precisely the terms of the Mirror deal: indeed, the Mirror's own legal department negotiated a contract with my solicitors. The morning I was released from prison I spoke with Morgan on the telephone and he was literally shrieking with excitement at the prospect of running my story. He gave me assurances that the deal had been approved by David Montgomery when it was vetoed a few hours later, on the grounds that the money offered was too much. Morgan was furious.

The ultimate hypocrisy occurred the next day when he leaked a press statement which read: "The Mirror has an absolute policy of not paying convicted criminals." In that case, what on earth was the Mirror doing when it signed the contract with me — a contract which, incidentally, stated that MGN Limited would pay my lawyers?

The Mirror's defence of its actions bears all the hallmarks therefore of panic and acute embarrassment. The discerning intellect will of course strip away Morgan's transparently dishonest protestations of morality. The issue concerns breach of contract, a point which seems to have been missed by this country's press. Another point which seems to have eluded a press which prides itself on its objectivity is that in this country the citizen, whether he has a criminal conviction or not, has an absolute right to enforce his rights through the courts.

Unlike Morgan, we shall not be giving newspapers interviews about this matter while it remains sub-judice. If Morgan chooses, unwisely I would suggest, to conduct his defence in the press, that is, of course, a matter for him. However, I should remind him that when this matter comes to court and he enters the witness box, he shall be cross-examined under oath. Darius Guppy, 8 Shawfield Street, London SW3 4BD.

Secondly, 17 years of deregulatory policies have depleted our merchant fleet, with the result that oil tankers in UK waters are predominantly foreign-flagged ships with lower safety standards.

Thirdly, the Government is clearly not moving fast enough to implement new safety initiatives such as double hulling, which it should consider making a requirement in such environmentally sensitive areas as Milford Haven, and escort towing, which would have prevented the accident.

Finally, we must look at the penalty system for dealing with poor safety standards, which currently provides no deterrent at all. Graham Allan MP, Shadow Minister for Transport, Room 506, 7 Millbank, London SW1P 3JA.

OF ALL commodities moved around the Earth, oil is transported in greater tonnage than any other. Oil tankers are the largest vehicles ever constructed. If the weight carried is compared, not to name, to the structural weight of the ship, an oil tanker is the flimsiest vehicle on the planet. To save money, tankers are manned by pick-

up crews, often without a common language. Under these circumstances, the ritual incantations about "safety standards" are as laughable as British Rail's annual shock at the arrival of snow. Michael Glickman, 80 Lambie Street, London NW5 4AB.

WHEN a similar incident occurred three months ago, there was no spillage because the tanker had a double hull. The transport minister, however, is reported as saying that the issue of single and double-hulled tankers was not for the Government to decide but for the International Maritime Organisation. So the way is open for a further disaster.

The Government is, of course, reluctant to confront the shipping and oil industries: double hulls cost money. But the damage will have to be paid for, not only in environmental terms, but also in terms of the damage to the tourist industry in west Wales, an area which can ill afford the cost. The losers are, however, far away from London, have little power in political or financial terms, and can only sit back in impatient rage and watch. Christine Minty, 59 Wilberforce Road, London N4 2SP.

A criminal waste

MAGGIE O'KANE'S article about Dawn Shields (Death of innocence, February 12) brought home to me once more the isolation of young life once the authorities have criminalised you. I started out in a similar situation: absconding from home, prostitution and single parenthood — all before I was 20.

The difference is I'm alive and Dawn Shields is dead. Young people who leave home, often because of violence, have no access to benefits and are forced to exchange sex for money, food, housing or even a bed for the night. This takes courage. The Children's Society understood this when it stated that child prostitution "is a survival behaviour not a sexual behaviour", and launched a campaign to decriminalise prostitution for under-18s and reinstate benefits — a vital recommendation the article ignores.

Because you are seen as living outside the law, you are more likely to suffer violence on every level, from boyfriend to police, and are not entitled to protection. Ms Shields reported to the police that she was a prostitute, but her boyfriend was always released. I also experienced violence for 10 years. When my pimp's other "girlfriend" and I got together to report him and offered to testify in court, the police were not interested. They said they were getting him for "something more important". We were not called to give evidence and he only got eight months. She's start to make changes where it really matters, with money for children and women, including compensation. It is appalling that Dawn Shields' mother, who is looking after her orphaned grandson, has been refused compensation because her daughter was a prostitute. We are helping another woman to appeal against a refusal given on the same grounds. Even a conviction for shoplifting, or a mental disability, are used to turn down claims. The state made Ms Shields a criminal and then refused to compensate for her life because she was a criminal. Sue McCarthy, English Collective of Prostitutes, King's Cross Women's Centre, 71 Tonbridge Street, London WC1H 9DZ.

How about doing away with coats of arms and carrying advertising on the back?

yellow pimpernel at its centre and, superimposed, the 'famous' Celtic cross found in 1886 in County Londonderry". Does the use of the cross symbolise the serious difficulties the country has been experiencing? Does the broken collar symbolise the two separated parts of what was once a complete entity? Or does it indicate that we are willing to surrender our links with Northern Ireland? B Woodriff, 40 Priory Road, Hampton TW12 2PJ.

Points of order

LINDA Grant (Chamber Lobbies, February 19) credits Sir Denis Thatcher with a place in the Lords. She credits Parliament with a vote I must have missed between a crèche and a rifle range. The former Coca Cola boss I knew was named Penny Hughes and Penny Davies. Is she now Penny Thornton? There are many reasons to increase the number of Ladies in the Lords, but it's a shame to be distracted by factual doubts. Peter Bottomley MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

ERIC LEATHERBARROW, Communications manager of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Co, writes that if the sacked Liverpool dockers' campaign for reinstatement is successful then "hundreds of jobs" will be destroyed (Letters, February 20). The sacking of hundreds of dockers would appear to save several hundred jobs. Has he been discussing communication skills with William Waldegrave? Keith Sinclair, 27 Strathmore Avenue, Hull HU6 7JL.

It's time for a royal showdown

MUCH as I agree with Francis Wheen's analysis of the British monarchy (Battle cry for a republic, February 14), he does not give a thought to the royal family as human beings. We can see them striving to squeeze some meaning into their lives: Charles wants to influence opinion in architecture and organic farming, Anne has shown herself to be seriously concerned with the plight of children. Philip chairs the Church's deliberations on the inner city. Diana wants to carry on being a social worker... Their private lives are very much the same as those of many other adults, but are they given sympathy? No. They have to act as symbols of something last relevant centuries ago.

It is surely high time we grew up and, in so doing, released this Queen and her family for a more meaningful existence somewhere outside the fairy-tale world in which we keep them incarcerated. And our politicians should have the imagination and courage to let them go. John Graham White, 19 Southfield, Manor Park, Sandy Lane, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham GL53 9DJ.

OTHER than being a supreme embarrassment, a curiosity for American tourists and an exploitable topic for the tabloid press, does the royal family's limited social function justify the vast outlay it takes to maintain them? Is anybody in our society really convinced that a monarchy is compatible with a true democracy? The recent behaviour of the younger royals is proof of their inadequacy to represent our country on an international level. If these ridiculous characters continue to personify us as a nation, what does it say about the British public as a whole? That our nation is a morally degenerate anachronism, clinging fearfully to the vestiges of its imperial past? It is time that we not only called for, but demanded, their abdication. A Thornton, Kingshorpe, Northampton NN2 8AJ.

A Country Diary

TAMAR VALLEY: Below Bear's Bridge, the Marden mill stream is braided with swirls of water reflecting blue sky and the main current turbulent, rushing through boulders and a boggy meadow above the silted mill pond. The sluice gate is closed and the water dashes over the weir, by-passing the narrow leat. A quarter mile downstream, the mill is in shade until 11am when shafts of sunlight filter through the steep oak wood where the highest trees rock in a north-west gale. Sun brightens colandine leaves beside the access track and lights the end wall of the miller's house, casting its shadow across the empty yard before the four-storeyed mill. Gushing water is the dominant sound; buildings are shut up; chimneys bereft of smoke and the mossy waterwheel motionless in its wheel-pit. Come spring, the house and converted sawmill cottage will accommodate holidaymakers while National Trust visitors, soothed by the regular rattle and wooden clack of

restored machinery, contemplate relics of an industrious and productive past. Eighty years ago, my grandfather took over the mill after his father and grandfather tenants of Lord Mount Edgcumbe of Cotehela. The waterwheel was geared for grinding corn, generating electricity, sawing wood for gates, making punnets and chip baskets for local fruit growers and there was a rest dent baker. Imported grain, bought at Plymouth's corn exchange, came upriver in the barge Mgrite to be unloaded into wagons and carted from Cotehela to the mill. Grandfather between Marden and Glamorgan Mill, a mill upstream, supervising and patrolling ponds, sluices, leats and the wooden launders carrying water to the overshot wheels. Millstones were regularly washed and dressed and Mr Mansel, occasionally stayed for a week, servicing the machinery and fitting new cogs cut from holly and apple wood. VIRGINIA SPIERS

Handwritten signature or note at the bottom of the page.

Diary Matthew Norman

FROM Hampshire comes astonishing news: my missing friend Dr Julian Lewis, the radio ham of Central Office, has been selected as Tory candidate for the safe seat of New Forest East. The diary in the downmarket Daily Telegraph quotes the little chap saying that he has been to the New Forest "over a dozen times recently", and that he regards it as "a change from moles, Marxists and militants". What this piece affects not to understand is that the real Julian was, of course, kidnapped weeks ago by Central Office infiltrators (he may well be kidnapped in the New Forest itself), and replaced with a robotic clone. This android's neuro-circuitry is clearly malfunctioning: first, it offered one diastolic favour as an inducement to denounce the BMA as a liar; and now it is giving imbecile quotes to another so-called rival about going to Hampshire. The full implications are hard to take in: no robot has ever been Parliament before, though doubts have been expressed as to whether "open government" minister Roger Freeman has been cloned from defective DNA of Cecil Parkinson.

AS the IRA renews its bombing campaign, words of condemnation from the ruling regime of Nigeria, that country's foreign office has said that the Nigerian government regretted Sunday night's explosion, and "deplored all forms of violence as a means of political expression". My thanks for passing on the earlier report of this statement to Ken Wiwa, son of the late Ken Sara-Wiwa.

I AM pleased to announce a new Book of the Month. It is A Woman's Place, by Edwina Currie. We ought to wait until March. I know, but the sense of anticipation is overwhelming. The first extract appears tomorrow.

THE Heritage Secretary has suffered an unwelcome attack of vanity. On Monday, Mrs. Bennet got it into her head that it was her right as minister to present David Bowie with his lifetime achievement award at the Brits, and to this end her officials spent Monday afternoon trying to bamboozle the organisers into a last-minute change. Alas, after a fierce row, they failed, and it was the legendary air-guitar virtuoso Mr Tony Blair who made the presentation. This obsession with meeting David Bowie has surprised Burnley watchers: until now, she was believed to have a powerful crush (or "pash", as she calls it) on both Meatloaf and, more recently, Lemmy from Motorhead.

EVEN as his award was giving one a maverick Labour press officer, Alastair "Bob's Boy" Campbell, the keeper of the Maxwell flame, was winning one. He has been named "FR of the Year", although (bless his bashful little heart) he refuses to accept or acknowledge the prize. Don't you just want to eat him?

AS promised on Friday, I have asked my friend Mary Whitehouse to decide whether fellatio is a vegetable. Her reply was admirably brief. "It makes me sick," she said, perhaps ambiguously. We then moved to another adjudication. S J Marshall writes from Ashford, Kent, to report that he "heard the word 'bollocks' on TV before 9pm for the first time". He wonders whether the watershed has been moved, or whether the word "bollocks" has become acceptable. On this question, Mrs Whitehouse is absolutely clear. "It's ugly and it's wrong," she says sharply. "I'm glad you have taken the matter up, because we need to fight it together." Indeed, she and many thanks. "No, thank you," she says. "I'm very grateful for your support."

DISTRESSING news from the public and legal notices page of the London Evening Standard. A bankruptcy notice has been served on Marilyn Rose Roberts, a debt collector from Edgware, Middlesex. A similar notice has been served on David Geoffrey Sansom, of Godalming, Surrey. Mr Sansom is a County Court bailiff.



Elements of risk you can bank on

Commentary Francine Stock

WHAT is an acceptable risk? The man who supervises Britain's banks from Threadneedle Street, Brian Quinn, retires next week. On the anniversary of the collapse of Barings, after a career that also spanned Johnson Matthey and BCCI, his valedictory message is that there is no guarantee it won't happen again. A guarantee is not something a regulator can offer. Indeed, he says it is an "absolutely fundamental part of an open, free-market economy that people are free to make choices as to where they put their money... with the possibility that it might lead to the risk of loss". The kind of deposit insurance that Britain and other developed economies have is "an explicit recognition that banks will go bust".

Explicit to the regulators maybe, but to most investors that risk appears as remote as the high-rolling speculation of

Gordon Gekko in the film Wall Street. Is it acceptable that a regulator says, "Look, the system's not perfect but our track record is a lot better than those of the Germans, or the Japanese"? Quinn's answer is direct. It is, he says, fundamentally a political question. You can have a system with more of the risk taken out of it — but the consumer, whether institution or individual, will not have the choice of financial products. In other words, the personal-finance sections of the weekend newspapers would not be popping with funds and mortgages and savings plans of baroque complexity.

Choices and risk are inextricably bedfellows. What is difficult for late-20th-century man and woman is that, as we make choices, we have both the illusion of control and the fear of losing it. The consideration of risk is, in many ways, a symptom of a society's success in overcoming hazards. Some years ago, the British Medical Association published a guide, Living With Risk, which set out a series of league tables of various threats. It identified the increasing popular nervousness caused by scientific progress, and the danger that as scientists make more discoveries that may prolong and enhance our lives, so we fear the mysterious toll that science may

take on our wellbeing. The Enlightenment's legacy is a belief in progress, but a resentment of the cost of progress. The BMA guide is studded with comparisons. A worker in the radiation industry has a 1 in 57,000 chance of dying from it in any one year. But by the same calculation, the death rate from all natural causes at age 40 is 1 in 850. For anyone of any age who smokes 30 cigarettes a day, the risk rises to 1 in 200. It isn't difficult to read in many of these catalogues a sturdy defence of the world of science and an implicit shifting of responsibility to the individual. But it does make compelling reading. Fatal accidents? Nearly twice as likely in the home as at work. Death from violence or poisoning? Twice as likely as a fatal road accident, 33 times more probable than murder.

But even with those odds, it could be you, or me. What affects the way we live our lives is the perception of risk, and, in the 1990s, risk seems particularly alarming, whether to health or freedom. In some cases, the fear is straightforward, visceral, the immediate preservation of life. Over the past 10 days, since the IRA blast at Westminster Quay, many people have begun their journey into work with a video loop of imagined panic and horror running in

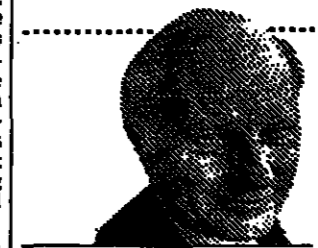
their brains. With each successive package defused or detonated, the loop speeds up. The prospect of a terrorist attack on a Tube, a train or a bus may not drive individuals to put their jobs in jeopardy by shunning public places; but it may deter them from window-shopping on a Saturday afternoon or a trip up West in the evening. For the vast majority who will never come close to a terrorist incident, the quality of their lives is a little changed, as they plug this new co-ordinate into the daily computations of which actions to take and when.

We can now expect the seasonal flight of American tourists from Europe at the first rumble of a Semtex explosion. It might be uncharitable to imagine many of them racing for consolation over the cancelled trip, to the freezer and

As we make choices, we have both the illusion of control and the fear of losing it

the quart pot of fudge-ripple cookie-dough heart-stopper ice-cream. But the risks of obesity are seen, rightly or wrongly, as those that the individual can control. The relatively small risk of terrorism is not. Like those images of old ladies eloquently unconscious on kitchen floors that people the back pages of colour supplements, many companies play, through advertising, on our insecurities and misconceptions about risk. They foster the illusion that it is possible entirely to control life's more unpleasant events by the purchase of an alarm or an

Stationery is such a moving experience



David McKie

LAST WEEK I took my friend Stacy a present from Barcelona: a spanking new exercise book. If you think an exercise book, even though something more evocative of Cezanne's character persecuted by malign Fates. Risk is an unavoidable facet of modern life, but it's a luxury that we can ponder it. The irony is that those things over which we already have most control because we make choices — diet, smoking, drugs and alcohol, use of cars, savings and investments — appear the least threatening, but carry the most risk.

For decades, politicians on kitchen floors that people the back pages of colour supplements, many companies play, through advertising, on our insecurities and misconceptions about risk. They foster the illusion that it is possible entirely to control life's more unpleasant events by the purchase of an alarm or an

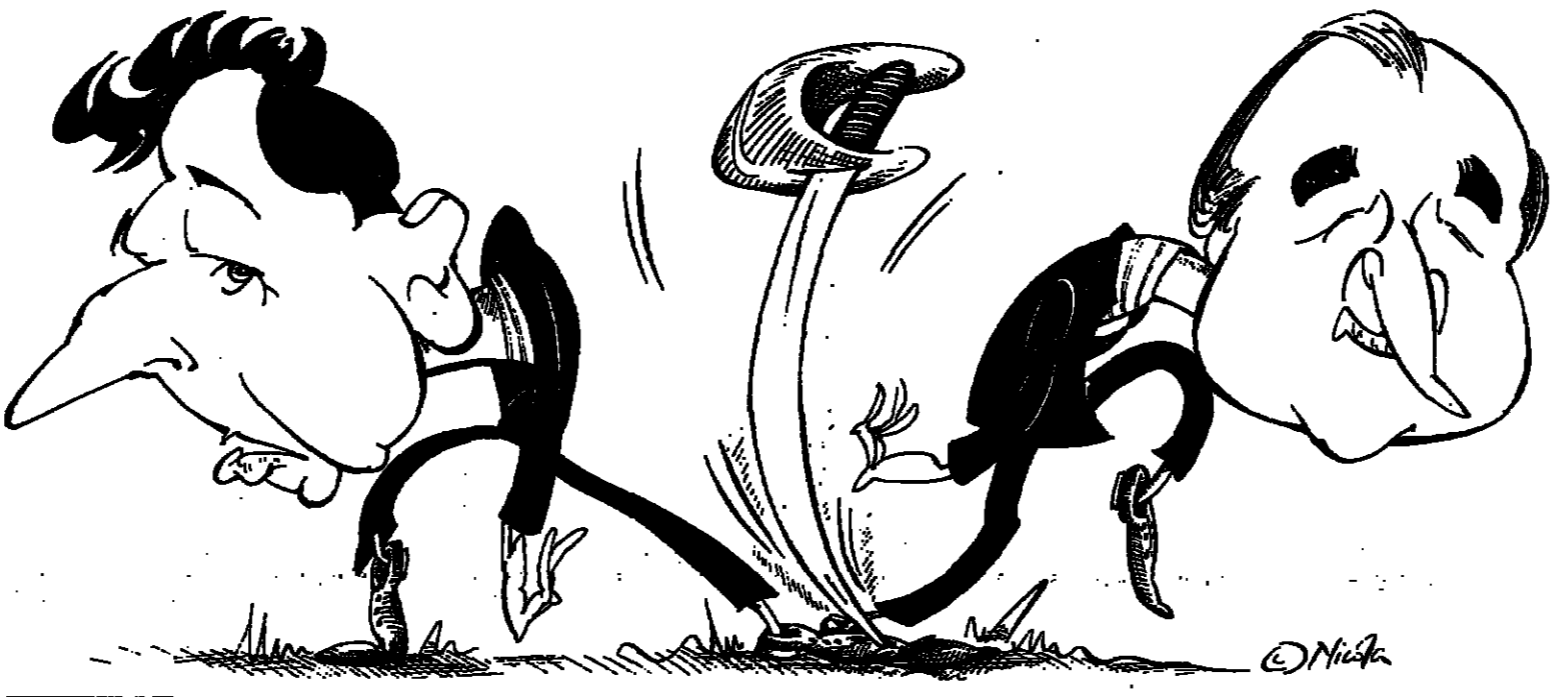
youth by deceiving others: in my case, by persuading a kindly aunt that a rubber date stamp and ink pad I had seen in a window in Wigan were in some way essential adjuncts to a primary-school education. Later on, on a much more spectacular scale, you deceive yourself. This works in two ways. Sometimes the deception is projected: you tell yourself that some hopeless chore, like the return, which you keep putting off will be rendered irresistible if you buy a Swedish netopad to complete it on. But more prevalent still is the self-deception where the purchase comes first and the project is just the excuse. Much of one's time in stationery shops is spent inventing excuses.

My early passion for stiff-covered exercise books began on the bleak and severely practical premises of W H Benn & Son, in Basinghall Street, Leeds. To justify my purchase, I started keeping a commonplace book, the sort of book into which one copies quotations from Samuel Butler and Gissing, augmented by thoughts of one's own, of the kind which make one despair three years later. The joy of this project was that it was covered in an old-fashioned shop in London, with one gorgeous hall of temptation (Bureau) in Great Newport Street and another called Ordning and Reda in New Row. Some of their customers seem to be normal, but many are hopeless addicts. There are the ones leaning over the counter and confiding in the assistant that they've just bought is a veritable simulacrum of one they picked up in this little place in Llandudno in late 1952, lost in 1963 in Pamplona, and never even dreamed of seeing again.

But to serious stationery addicts, places like these belong in the fantasy league. Their delights are those of the brother, not the everyday bedroom. Your true stationery addict also prizes objects of some utility, such as you find in ancient commercial stationers with cluttered brown shelves, heaped high with the kind of ledger in which elderly men in high collars diligently kept the accounts in small engineering firms in Macclesfield at the turn of the century. The most treasured objects of all for a stationery addict are the ones you can tell your friends were picked up from this little place in the back streets of Bethnal Green.

The penalties of stationery gametry, as of many addictions I guess, are the cost of the goods and the lingering feeling of shame at succumbing. It's a world which relies on limitless self-deception. You begin in your penitence

ADDICTS are greatly encouraged by the kind of in colour supplements under titles like "How I Write", in which authors of proven distinction explain that they can't write a word except by long hand, on double foolscap, using a Conway Stewart purchased in Donegal in the summer of '83, by an open east window, in a house on a hill 112 miles from London, and with something by Boccherini playing softly in the next room. Let any one of these conditions remain unsatisfied, and not one word will emerge. Life has never been quite the same since Waterman's ceased to market the only blue ink which was indisputably blue (it came in hexagonal bottles with a herald on the label) or since some German exporter discontinued the manufacture of squared paper pads, joined at the side and with perforated detachable pages, which I used to pick up at this little place in the back streets of Bethnal Green. Like all stationery addicts, I dream that some day I will wander into this old-fashioned shop in Rotherham, and discover abundant supplies of both, newly redeemed after long neglect in a warehouse. If I ever do, Joan Collins and Jeffrey Archer had better watch out.



The rusty sword

After Scott: Richard Shepherd regrets that politicians no longer take the honourable way out

FIRST reaction to the Scott Report appeared to have settled the matter. Ian Lang seemed so confident that the Government was in the clear. He told the Commons that William Waldegrave had been acquitted of the charge of knowingly misleading Parliament and that Sir Nicholas Lyell had acted entirely appropriately in discharging his responsibilities. Yet this is not necessarily the impression far the Government from reading the report. Nor is it the impression shared by some staunch Conservatives.

On Friday, I was speaking on the phone to a life-long party supporter and noted down notes as she spoke. "People are already suspicious of the Government," she said. "This doesn't help us. We used to be able to trust their word. It does lower standards. I won't say the Labour Party would have acted any better. But we used to expect better things of the Conservative Party. Lying is an everyday thing in Parliament. It is becoming acceptable. There's right and there's wrong. But I don't want to make the Government's position any worse than it is."

It was not what I expected. But I rather suspect her comments reflect a general view of many Conservatives. Sometimes we in Westminster become so absorbed by our own processes that we forget how Parliament is perceived by our fellow citizens. Sir Richard Scott's report clearly exonerates many of the accused — those, for instance,

who signed the so-called gagging orders on the instructions of the Attorney-General. But there is no comfort for the Attorney-General in his failure to convey Michael Heseltine's reservations and objections to the trial judge. It is when the report addresses the way Whitehall and ministers have viewed the Commons that one can see how the line adopted by Ian Lang begins to unravel.

The answers to parliamentary questions and the instructions of the Attorney-General. But there is no comfort for the Attorney-General in his failure to convey Michael Heseltine's reservations and objections to the trial judge. It is when the report addresses the way Whitehall and ministers have viewed the Commons that one can see how the line adopted by Ian Lang begins to unravel.

When asked why the Government allowed the Matrix Churchill prosecution to go ahead, even though some ministers and officials knew at the time of the sales of their arms-making machinery, most people (69 per cent) pick "to avoid political embarrassment to ministers", 29 per cent blame "confusion and mistakes taken between government departments", and only 11 per cent think the Government was seeking to protect "Britain's national interest".

But when it comes to ministers' motives in signing the Public Interest Immunity Certificates to prevent the release of government papers to the

court, nearly three-quarters believe that it wanted to avoid political embarrassment, and half the Tory loyalists agree. The Scott Report has so far seemed unlikely to lead to the resignations of William Waldegrave or Sir Nicholas Lyell, but it has undoubtedly planted a popular depth-charge under Whitehall security.

A GREAT majority of people (78 per cent) report that they are "more inclined" to agree with a public right of access to government decision-making papers "to prevent misconduct by ministers and officials". By similar majorities, people want Civil Service advice to ministers and background papers to their decisions to be released, and three-quarters want cabinet papers published earlier.

Scott's insistence on a shake-up in the relationship between civil servants and ministers also finds an echo in public opinion, with a four-to-

one majority against civil servants being responsible only to ministers, as they are now. The public want civil servants to be directly responsible to Parliament and, more radical still, 83 per cent believe the responsibilities of civil servants should be enshrined in a binding legal code of conduct. In the immediate aftermath of Scott, Labour's hue and cry for resignations has so far studiously ignored the question of what arrangements should be put in place to redress the unequal balance between government and Whitehall, and Parliament and the people. Tony Blair was silent on such issues. In his recent John Smith Lectures, if Labour is not to seem merely to be exploiting Scott for partisan ends, then Robin Cook, when the Commons fully debates the report next Monday, must be empowered to give specific pledges on opening up government to the public gaze and restoring the power of Parliament to scrutinise ministers and the Civil Service more effectively.

Richard Shepherd is Conservative MP for Aldridge Brownhills

Patrick Dunleavy is Professor of Government at the LSE; Stuart Weir is Senior Research Fellow at the University of Essex. ICM interviewed 752 adults across Britain on February 18-17.

Now Labour must open up Patrick Dunleavy and Stuart Weir analyse a post-Scott poll

THE Scott Report is generating a passionate circus of political infighting. So what's at stake? Simply a dodgy week of discomfiture for the Government, and scalp-hunting by the opposition parties? Or another decisive break with discredited political traditions, as Nolan turned out to be for Parliament?

The public at least know what they want. The first in-depth survey of people's reactions to Scott, conducted by ICM for the Rowntree Reform Trust's State of the Nation series of polls, shows that the public overwhelmingly want major reforms to stop the rot. The public divide sharply, according to their political loyalties, in their judgment over the sales of arms to Iraq and the Matrix Churchill prosecutions. But voters for all parties unite to demand binding changes in the conduct of government. There is especially a high level of consensus

around Sir Richard Scott's own demands for genuinely open government. Even among Tory loyalists, unease runs deep: a third are ready to admit their distrust of government ministers. Everyone else is strongly critical. Even people unsure who they will vote are sure that ministers misled.

When asked "From what you have heard, do you think ministers broke or did not break the United Nations arms embargo to Iraq?", nearly two-thirds (68 per cent) are clear that ministers did break the embargo, compared with only 16 per cent who feel they did not. Nearly half the Conservative supporters who express a view say that ministers broke the embargo. A staggering 92 per cent believe that ministers misled the House of Commons (including five out of six Tory voters). But the partisan divide quickly reappears when the public get the chance to distinguish motives. Two-

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Sir Kenneth Robinson

True servant of the public

IT WAS a bright day for many of us in St Pancras Council Chamber in 1948. Labour had won the borough, elections and among the rejoicing comrades was a handsome young man in the uniform of a Lieutenant Commander RNVR. His name was Kenneth Robinson. Not many knew who he was for the simple reason that he had been on service in the Mediterranean, the Far East and the Pacific; but Robinson who had died aged 84, quickly, quietly made his mark.

St Pancras Council was a nursery of talent. Bernard Shaw was a vestryman when he lived in Fitzroy Square. Barbara Castle (née Betts) enlivened proceedings before the war and among the 1945 intake was Krishna Menon, who became the High Commissioner of India.

In the aftermath of the war the new and mainly inexperienced council faced formidable problems in much bombed central London. Kenneth Robinson worked harmoniously with all sorts. He had no "side" as he contributed modestly and clearly on the most complicated matters.

He became an unlikely vice-chairman of the highways committee, but his heart was elsewhere — as befitted a future chairman of the Arts Council. He wanted "something done" about lifting the spirits of exhausted people as well as mending their bombed houses and schools.

He was supported in this by several kindred souls, but not everybody wanted the diversion of resources from more practical demands. It says much for the persuasive powers of Robinson and his friends that by 1946 was founded the St Pancras Arts

and Civic Council — fast going by local government tempo. Kenneth was able to remind councillors that under Nye Bevan, Minister of Housing, he had empowered local authorities to spend up to a 6d (2.5p) rate on the arts. In practice, few councils used or knew about this in those harassed times. In St Pancras membership was open to the public. The fees for organisations was five shillings (25p) a year, for individuals three shillings (15p), and for under 18s one shilling (5p). It started the first St Pancras Arts Festival which survives as the Camden Festival.

Kenneth never spoke openly about higher political ambitions. He carried on from his Highgate home with his local work with his wife — also a councillor and an accomplished amateur painter. Then suddenly the MP for North St Pancras (George House) died in 1949 and Kenneth said he was surprised to be asked to accept nomination for the by-election, which he won, and was able to give up the day job of a company secretary.

At first he was not prominent in the House — he wasn't that sort of person. He was soon drafted into the Whips' Office (thought to be a "steady chap") but he was not happy in that Trappist citadel. Fortunately for him he was expelled on Atlee's orders for voting with 63 members to support Frank Berwick's amendment to the Atomic Energy Authority Bill that "there be no British manufacture of the H bomb until permissive resolutions of both Houses had been passed".

He enjoyed using his liberal mindedness on the backbenches. He spoke in support

of the Wolfenden Report and continued to work for changes in the treatment of homosexuals at a time when such reforms were not even as partly acceptable as they are today. He successfully introduced the Suicide Act in 1961 which reformed the legislation which previously had made attempted suicide a crime in Common Law. He was less successful with a private bill to reform the abortion laws — that was to come later, helped by the earlier discussions.

He often spoke about mental health and worked behind the scenes as well. His campaigning contributed importantly to the passing of the Mental Health Act of 1959.

It was no surprise when No 2 shadow to Edith Summerskill on health. When she moved "upstairs" he was No 1. In Wilson's government he was made Minister of Health, but not in the Cabinet. His address had been a doctor and it was his ambition to follow him. Kenneth tried to be gracious to his overlord, but the plan did not work out and of course this absurd arrangement was later dismantled. Perhaps to make amends Wilson created a new job as Minister for Land and Planning under Tony Greenwood. But by mutual consent this post was abolished in 1969 and for a difficult and miserable few months he went to the back benches.

Not many of his friends were surprised when he decided to leave Parliament and start another life. He had already in 1961 written an elegant biography of Wilkie Collins and he told me he might settle down to write another book. But such an experienced, likeable man was not



Easy rider... Kenneth Robinson, new chairman of London Transport in 1972, takes the Tube to work

Then Wilson made a serious mistake. He succumbed to the persuasion of the greedy kingdom-building Dick Crossman that health should be amalgamated with his department of Social Security and he should be head of both. Kenneth tried to be gracious to his overlord, but the plan did not work out and of course this absurd arrangement was later dismantled. Perhaps to make amends Wilson created a new job as Minister for Land and Planning under Tony Greenwood. But by mutual consent this post was abolished in 1969 and for a difficult and miserable few months he went to the back benches.

allowed to retreat to the attic. He was asked to join the board of the Conservative-backed British Steel Corporation. Thence to the London Transport Executive (paid) and later to the Chairmanship of the Arts Council (unpaid). There he was no stereotype mandarin. He wanted the classics to be cherished, but was keen to encourage new art and art forms, whether he personally admired them or not. He did not want the arts to ossify but he pointed out in a chairman's speech, "The Council must balance support for the avant-garde with respect for the more traditional public taste".

In many ways he seemed something of a modern William Morris, both aesthetic and practical in passionately wanting to deal with the disfigurements in society so that Burns could share with him the wealth of music and literature and art. That was the main inspiration of his poli-

tics. Marvellously he found time for the National Trust, for the Carnegie Council on Arts and Disabled People. He had been chairman of the English National Opera and the Young Concert Artists Trust. And he wrote (besides his Wilkie Collins biography) Policy For Mental Health (1958), Patterns Of Care (1961), and Look At Parliament (1962).

He was knighted in 1983 after he retired from the Arts Council. Many of us are still wondering why he did not reach the Lords. Certainly it did not bother him — he looked forward to more time for enjoying and learning about the things he loved.

This ever courteous and modest man had come a long way from being Vice-Chairman of St Pancras Highways Committee. But he told me some time ago that, but for the St Pancras experience, he would never have thought of public life. "I would still probably be chained to an office

desk". That would indeed have been a traumatic loss to the public life of this country and its people.

Leon Jagger

Roy Jenkins, Lord Jenkins of Hillhead, writes: Kenneth Robinson was, I think, the least self-seeking and most quietly civilised man I ever encountered in parliamentary or ministerial politics.

He came into the House of Commons in 1948, a year after me, but I did not really get to know him until 1954 when we went together and with about four others on a Fabian visit to Austria. We went by train from Oxford to Vienna and over a rather dimmer than Belgium and into Germany he and I sat talking about life and books for hours in the restaurant car (railway meals were better and the service more leisurely in those days). He made the trip for me, remember his quizzically enquiring on a day in the Bur-

geland whether I thought that Rust (where we lunched) was the old town of Eisenstadt (where we inspected the kapell of which Haydn had been master).

Indeed, in the deeply divided Labour Party of the 1950s we belonged to different tribes, I a hard Gaitskellite, he a mild Bevanite. It was the beginning of a loose but persistent friendship. In the 1968 leadership election, the very efficient Wilson organisation got Kenneth to try to prise me away from George Brown. He was much the best choice, although he did not succeed. Our long and rational conversation created no breach, which was not perhaps surprising as his last political activity was as a supporter of the SDP and the Alliance.

He was a highly competent but hardly swashbuckling minister, and I always wondered how much he enjoyed the high-wire acts of politics. Indeed, despite the remarkable variety of posts which he occupied, I always wondered whether there was not some other more elusive life he would have preferred to be leading.

Slightly following the same pattern was his one book and no more, his Ministry without the Cabinet. In his old age, being a knight but not a peer, although his wisdom and his unusual width of experience would have enabled him to contribute much to the House of Lords. On the other hand he had a long life, a happy marriage, a sweep of interests, and a strong place in the hearts of his friends.

Sir Kenneth Robinson, politician and businessman, born March 18, 1911; died February 16, 1996



Bruce... renowned as 'a company mum'

Brenda Bruce

Snap, crackle and pal

BRENDA BRUCE was a backbone player at the Royal Shakespeare Company for many years, excelling as Mistress Page in The Merry Wives Of Windsor, a role she played three times at the Stratford-upon-Avon; the Nurse in Romeo and Juliet; and, most movingly of all, Paulina in Trevor Nunn's all-white version of The Winter's Tale.

Although she only ever "admitted to 8", she was, to the astonishment of many close friends, 76. She died as she lived, quickly and without fuss, suffering heart failure after entering hospital for tests. Cancer had been diagnosed last month. She never stopped working, though, and had recently filmed D H Lawrence's The Widowing Of Mrs Holroyd, for the BBC.

Bruce was a small, compact woman of mid-length, Celtic hair and distinctive beauty, with a mop-style head of lustrous red hair and a voice of great power which combined qualities of mellifluousness, crackle and bite. Terry Hands, with whom she worked at the RSC and at the Royal National Theatre last year, playing Mistress Quickly in The Merry Wives, said: "She had immaculate timing." By the time she came to national recognition she had already enjoyed a career of amazing breadth and variety. Her friend Joanna Murray, the actress and director, recalls how, in 1958, she needed one more small chorus girl to complete the casting of a new revue, 1068 And All That. Bruce, button-

nosed and "irresistibly sweet and charming", was instantly chosen and so made her London debut.

From there she embarked on a three-year stint at the Birmingham Rep, then went to the Liverpool Playhouse and the Alexandra, Birmingham. She toured in revue with ENSA during the war and became a fixture in the West End soon after, renowned as one of "Binkie's starlets" — the actor regularly employed by the all-powerful impresario Hugh Beaumont. She particularly enjoyed playing Shaw, and counted Vivie in Mrs Warren's Profession among her favourite roles.

Before joining the RSC in 1964, she appeared in the British premiere of Beckett's Happy Days at the Royal Court, directed by George Devine, replacing Joan Plowright, who was "too old" when the latter discovered she was pregnant. Bruce had learned the long text by staying up all hours of the night and was not much helped by Beckett's turning up at rehearsals with sheaves of detailed notes and a metronome. It was typical of her that from this traumatic experience sprouted an abiding friendship with the great minimalist.

Having trained as a dancer and worked with the Ballet Rambert, her general expertise and wide experience proclaimed a career simply unavailable to young actors of today. But she always wore her coat of service lightly. She was especially renowned as "a company mum": Terry

Hands recalls that she always carried a bag containing "chocolates for Alan Howard, aspirins and Tampax." One imagines a director felt more secure about a new production than he would be with the actor's first husband, the broad-caster Roy Radford, came from a family of variety artists and ran the King's Arms, Welles-

borough, near Stratford, for many years. After Rich died, Bruce married the actor Clemens McCullin, also a member of the RSC. They had an adopted son, Sam, who died of asthma in 1974. McCullin died two years later. Subsequently, Bruce worked tirelessly and unostentatiously for both Asthma Research and Amnesty International.

She last revealed her sly, ingratiating splendour in contemporary stage work as a landlady of a flat to rent in Michael Frayn's underrated Here at the Donmar Warehouse in 1993. Her character was a lonely widow, whose

She had a feeling for the right line, the precise word, and the appropriate action

memories and knowing sadness were beautifully counterpointed with the young couple's philosophical wrangling on the threshold of a new place, a new life.

Michael Coveney

Arnold Wesker writes: I was nearly 30 years into my life as a playwright before I met this famous name — the kind of name that comes up on every-one's first list for casting. What? Brenda Bruce was actually interested in my plays Yardsale and Whatever Happened To Betty Lemon which I was about to direct at The Lyric Hammersmith. This diminutive genius crept into our front room as though into the dock on trial for her life. She was exactly the actress I was looking for — no airs, no heartiness, no theatrical voices or funny faces (those later), no flattery, no certitudes.

I write in a state of shock with the elegant Elysée fountain pen she bought me as a first-night present for Blood Libel which she drove up for her first list for casting. Twenty! She drove — chaperoning a friend from the States! Dusty, my wife, had driven ahead with others and had asked Brenda to take charge of him. She loved such requests. The strongest instinct in her personality was not to perform on stage which, terror and hard work aside, she could do as naturally as she could breathe, but to be needed, useful.

Bad acting offended her but acting was not a profession commanding her highest

regard. It was the writer who missed — not only the playwright but the novelist, biographer, travel-writer. She read voraciously. The last time I saw her — Valentine's Day, huddled under her blankets — she was feeling unaccountably cold — I looked at her bookshelves and asked: had she really read all those? Her reply was characteristically apologetic: "I'm afraid so."

In the course of rehearsals I discovered the strength of character with which she should have crowned a fine acting career, and rewarded a tenacity of spirit I will miss. Oh! how miss, as will her carefully chosen, small circle of precious friends.

Her dearest concern was what she could do for her brother-in-law built her conservatory, and she developed a passion for our house in the Black Mountains where she assumed the title of head gardener. She'd spend days there on her own digging, pruning, planting, cutting branches to reveal vistas.

She was my friend and nag. Faxes would arrive sometimes daily with her hilarious one-line drawings accompanying advice on what to do with my life and writings. Her criticisms were astute, and her cautions wise. Only her enthusiasms sometimes distorted what was possible.

Her major flaw was that she could handle for herself — a self-effacement that was irritating. She feared constantly that she was an intrusion in everybody's life. The truth was she had an eye for beautiful objects, a sense of what should be worn, a feeling for the right line, the precise word, the appropriate action, but her tentative manner of offering rendered her sometimes the wrong person to be right. At the same time she offered she feared offering. She urged and retreated, advised and stepped back.

pursued an action then apologised for so doing. It was not always comfortable being in her company.

All this — her life and personality, her losses, her talent, her quirkiness, her hesitant wisdom — inspired me to write a play for her: Wind Spirit. The wishes and wishes she'll never perform. Nor will she play Maudie, the film of Doris Lessing's novel The Diary of Jane Somers, the rights for which she doggedly bought year after year determined to find a producer. The one she should have crowned a fine acting career, and rewarded a tenacity of spirit I will miss. Oh! how miss, as will her carefully chosen, small circle of precious friends.

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Her major flaw was that she could handle for herself — a self-effacement that was irritating. She feared constantly that she was an intrusion in everybody's life. The truth was she had an eye for beautiful objects, a sense of what should be worn, a feeling for the right line, the precise word, the appropriate action, but her tentative manner of offering rendered her sometimes the wrong person to be right. At the same time she offered she feared offering. She urged and retreated, advised and stepped back.

Brenda Bruce, actress, born July 7, 1919; died February 19, 1996

Birthdays

John Cooper, author, journalist, Ed Taylor, actor, 50; Hubert de Givenchy, fashion designer, 69; Sir John Goulden, ambassador to Nato, 66; Sir Magnus Linklater, former editor, the Scotsman, 64; Robert Wiggabe, president of Zimbabwe, 72; Alan Rickman, actor, 50.

Birthdays

Kevin, 22 today, your natural mother loves you, V.I. To place your announcement telephone 0171 611 5888

Jackdaw



Par four four

WHEN YOU name a racehorse, the name has to be approved by an official body to ensure that your choice is not inappropriate. It should be the same in pop music, and the first requirement should be that all approved names must have something — a sense of intrigue or fantasy or mischief or mystery or blank contrariness or whatever — which hints at a little thought, or heart, or ambition. The reason I've been thinking about this is that every time I look at the American album charts I get depressed, and the main reason I get depressed is that there is a group with the

dullest, worst, most dispiriting name in pop history. They are called the Dave Matthews Band.

The Dave Matthews Band. It sounds like some kind of arch "please welcome the sound of young Norwich" Alan Farridge joke. The scary thing is: it's for real, and no one would mind. A few years ago, even the record company would have made them come up with something a little zippier, but right now it perfectly fits the mood of America's most popular music: changing easy-listening rock which shows off musicianship and friendliness as its twin badges of sincerity. The Dave Matthews Band (who peddle an unbelievably annoying, slightly jazz-influenced variety have sold three million albums.

But they are just the small fry. The most successful group in America is Hootie & The Blowfish... I suppose it's to their credit that Hootie — who surely are as surprised as anyone else by the obscene scale of their triumph — seem fairly immune to their own uncoolness. They have made

no secret of the fact that their favourite pastime is golf. With a heavy heart, I offer the following details. Singer Darus Rucker recently competed at a celebrity golf tournament in Las Vegas, teamed with John Daly — the pug-faced ex-alcoholic golfer who had the world's worst haircut until he shaved it off to reveal one of the world's most unsightly scalps — and Bon Jovi guitarist Richie Sambora. Mr Rucker sank a 40-foot putt which was CNN's "Shot of the Day". It is the event's horrific name which most economically exhibits the terrifying willfulness and complicity that characterises one central strand of modern American culture. It is called Fairway to Heaven.

Woman's place

When Fr Millward tells me that women are superior to men I feel much as a black man might feel if told how good he is at singing and

dancing, or a Jew how good at making money. What he imagines to be flattery, I experience as an attempt to confine women in yet another constricting stereotype that suits the speaker very well but has little to do with the hopes and ambitions of the person addressed.

There is always a certain giggle-quotient in such naïveté, however. I often remember, with malicious pleasure, the late-19th century Anglican Bishop Wordsworth who, upon hearing (with immense difficulty) that women were trying to set up a house of learning for women at Oxford, preached a sermon telling women to stop it at once since they were "too good" for education: their only role, give or take a little childbearing, was to be an uplifting influence upon men.

Happily, the women paid not the slightest attention to this nonsense, but went right ahead and set up colleges... I suggest that Fr Millward uses the upcoming period of

silence and reflection to brood upon these things. From a letter to the Catholic weekly Tablet, written by Monica Furlong.

Young at heart

IN THE 70s, girls like me fell in love with Neil Young and his long hair, and our radios, that is, with little yellow earphones that ended up either clogged with wax or trodden on. As long as our parents were unaware that we were still awake for John Peel, we could enjoy the company of whoever we pleased. While our school friends passed off Man to Bay City Rollers, we remained faithful (albeit remotely).

And as we little girls became big girls I didn't matter that me like Mr Young were — well — not so young any more. Girls like me can't help it; we prefer older men rather than new men. You can keep Keanu; Sean Connery's still sexy past 60. Our dream dates can think, feel and speak with the richness of experience; they've read the book, heard

the music and seen the film, but no longer feel the need to wear the T-shirt (although they may still look good in denim). Girls like me are not after sugar daddies; we can earn and spend independently. Nor do we fall for father figures, any more than 30-year-old kid brother figures. We happen to like grey hair, and don't mind wrinkles as long as they include a few laughter-lines around twinkling eyes.



Grey love... Men's Health

I am not appealing for older men to come forward, although it's still a source of occasional regret that Neil and Sean are both spoken for — Girls like me say, grey is groovy. You've got what it takes to interest us. From the prize-winning letter in the March issue of Men's Health, written by S J Moll of Aberdeen.

Pro-choice

SISTERHOOD is powerful, but so is sibling rivalry; so is the drudgery of daily life; so is conservatism, which, with some unintended help from the sillier reaches of academe, has half succeeded in turning "feminism" into a much-mocked anachronism, a mood ring left over from the self-bottom era. The movement's setbacks have become staples of journalism: the feminisation of poverty and the breakdown of the family, the glass ceiling and the biological clock, sexual harassment and domestic abuse. Given this litany, no one should be surprised that a revisionist orthodoxy has

been hardening; people say that feminism, always an elite movement, is in retreat... Feminism doesn't get much respect these days. But after a generation of struggle its results are everywhere: in jobs... in legal and reproductive rights... in politics... As a way of living, feminism is flourishing... Choice itself, and not an artificial choice, has been the real goal of the women's movement. And what the experience of the generation since "women's lib" demonstrates is that choice is not an answer to the question of how life should be lived, only a condition for answering that question freely.

From Dorothy Wickenden's intro to the New Yorker's special Women's Issue. Jackdaw wants your jewels. E-mail jackdaw@guardian.co.uk; fax 0171-713 4368. Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

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JAVICO 150

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Finance Guardian

Unions fear 4,000 job losses despite record earnings of £1.75bn • Share buy-back being considered

NatWest puts profits first

Patrick Donovan
City Editor

THE NatWest Group stood condemned by its unions yesterday for putting "profit before people" after chief executive Derek Wanless admitted that more jobs face the axe, while announcing record earnings of £1.75 billion and a 17 per cent increase in dividends.

Mr Wanless refused to speculate on the number of job losses planned throughout its nationwide retail banking chain, although unions were yesterday predicting up to 4,000 more layoffs in the next 12 months alone.

But Mr Wanless made clear that NatWest, which has cut 23,000 staff over the last six

years, will continue to reduce employee numbers. He said: "We expect the trend to continue downwards."

The bank's job shedding plans attracted bitter criticism from its main banking unions. "The bank is unscrupulous and putting profits before people. The cost-income ratio is now king," said Dai Davies, assistant general secretary of the independent union, the NatWest Staff Association.

Bifu negotiating officer, Peter Haines, said: "Staff are being sacked and communities abandoned in the relentless pursuit of greater profits - it's heartless."

But the City yesterday gave NatWest a warm reception as shares firmed 7p to 681p on the announcement that pre-tax profits are up by 10 per cent to £1.75 billion for 1995.



The total dividend is up 17 per cent to 25.5p. NatWest attempted to dampen down speculation that it was planning another

takeover following the recent \$8 billion (£2 billion) sale of its US Bancorp operations. The bank earlier this week announced that it had bought the fund management company, Gartmore, for \$472 million. Chairman Lord Alexander said NatWest was always on the look out for suitable businesses. Areas of interest would be life assurance and pensions, although the bank declined to comment on speculation that it may bid for Clerical Medical.

But Lord Alexander said that he regarded building societies in particular as being over-priced. "We may have money to spend but that does not mean that we have to spend it," he said.

He added that NatWest was within its target of delivering a 17.5 per cent return on

equity over the economic cycle. And if it found no attractive acquisitions, it would consider hoisting investor returns through buying back its own shares. The bank has already got shareholders' approval to buy back £100 million of its own stock.

Lord Alexander said that NatWest was now beginning to reap the benefits of its strategic shake-up, which has seen the group concentrating on developing financial services in the UK, building up NatWest Markets internationally and competing for wealthy individual customers through its Coutts private banking business.

Although the number of bad debts has fallen "substantially" across the entire banking market, NatWest said its overall bill for provisions has

increased because of "one specific provision", believed to be its exposure to the financially stricken Eurotunnel project. This saw provisions for bad and doubtful debts jump from \$35 million to £114 million at NatWest Markets, boosting the group's total provisions from \$516 million to \$539 million over the full-year period.

The bank declined to comment on its lending to Eurotunnel, although NatWest is one of the project's top four bankers and is thought to have up to £300 million outstanding.

"It is not our policy to talk about individual customers," directors said. Mr Wanless also declined to comment in any detail about the progress of restructuring talks between Eurotunnel and its consortium of 235 bankers.

Notebook

Growth abroad, cuts at home



Edited by Mark Milner

PROFITS of £1.75 billion can hardly be dismissed as irrelevant, but yesterday's record results from NatWest are neither the whole story nor, arguably, even the most important part.

The key is the strategy that NatWest has unfolded and is beginning to execute. The group is a very different animal from, say, four years ago. These days, NatWest executives paint a picture of a tightly-focused group which aims to use a strong UK financial services base to underpin the international expansion of NatWest Markets investment banking business and Coutts.

With retentions of £731 million last year and the proceeds from the sale of the US retail operations, NatWest is scarcely short of the resources to carry out the strategy. One part was put in place on Monday with the announcement of the Gartmore fund management business. NatWest is making no secret of the fact that it is looking at the life insurance and pensions industry, though it is keeping a discreet silence on speculation linking it with Clerical Medical.

Rather in the way that Gartmore provides an opening to the US market through its links with NationsBank, so the likes of a Clerical Medical would give NatWest access to the UK life and pensions business and provide the products to allow it to compete in what looks likely to be the potentially vast market for private health care and retirement provision in continental Europe.

But while the challenge for NatWest will be to manage growth abroad, at home its task will be to protect its existing position. That will mean substantial investment, not least in technology, which means a continuation of the process of attrition which has seen the group shed 27,000 jobs in recent years.

NatWest's new strategy may well prove a winner, but the burden of carrying it out will be borne by more than the balance sheet.

programme to privatise the energy industry has benefited in this way. There is little doubt that Hanson's interest in buying PowerGen at the time of its privatisation back in 1990 had a beneficial effect from the Treasury's point of view.

A slight improvement in the terms of the nuclear sell-off, either by trade sale or stock market flotation, will still not make the privatisation a wise move. The public sector will still be left with the ageing Magnox reactors. And, in the case of a serious and expensive nuclear accident, the taxpayer might well be left to foot part of the insurance bill. It might also be argued that Duke's interest in a buying a slice of Britain's nuclear industry suggests that it reckons it can make a better return here than it does in the US, where it is one of the largest nuclear operators. This scarcely argues that British taxpayers will be getting a great deal.

The economics of the nuclear generation of electricity is a murky area, but it does look as if the Government, for reasons of political dogma and short-term returns, is determined to press on with the sale. But while it may not be looking beyond the next election, the sensible management of nuclear power operates over a much longer time scale.

M4 snarl-up

AT first glance yesterday's money supply figures give the Bank of England some much-needed ammunition against further interest rate cuts. M4, the broad measure of money, jumped by 1.4 per cent last month. This pushed the annual rate of growth up from 9.8 per cent to a beefy 10.7 per cent, well above the Government's 3 to 9 per cent monitoring range.

More money usually precedes more inflation. But as the Bank itself is forced to admit, M4 has been misbehaving lately. Distortions have arisen from a number of factors, including what one Bank official dubbed "city noise", large-scale borrowing to fund Glaxo or Granada-style takeovers.

January's figures are also awry. This time, however, the new "gilt repo" market is to blame. Banks can now sell gilts to a customer for cash, with an undertaking to repurchase them at a specified price, and at a specified date.

The bank deposits the money it receives, which shows up in M4. This particular granola accounted for as much as three-quarters of January's rise, according to Bank economists. It also means that M4 will play tricks again when the banks recover their gilts and have to pay back the money.

There is an irony in all this. The introduction of an open repo market was one of the reforms of the gilt market high on the "wish list" of its users. But, in meeting their aspirations, the Bank has had to accept distortions to an indicator it could use to build a case against interest rate cuts that it may, in its heart of hearts, deem unnecessary.

Power points

THE emergence of the US group Duke Power as a possible buyer for a large chunk of Britain's nuclear industry is convenient, to say the least, for the Government.

The planned flotation is certain to come under heavy fire for its failure to provide a reasonable return for the taxpayers' investment. So the intervention of a possible trade buyer, which may well allow the Government to get better terms, is timely.

Nor would it be the first time that the Government's

Politicians accused of policy sops to curb unemployment

Richard Thomas

BOTH Labour and Conservative politicians are offering ineffective "free lunch" prescriptions to cut unemployment, a leading think-tank says today.

In a report on the future of work, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation — a social policy research body — calls for sacrifices from the employed majority to cut the dole queue.

Pamela Meadows, editor of the paper and director of the policy studies, said yesterday: "If we want to do something about unemployment, the rest of us have to pay for it. It can't be done without cost, there is no free lunch, as the politicians seem to believe."

Three options to close the widening gap between the working population and the unemployed are presented in the Rowntree paper: increased taxes to pay for public sector employment, lower wages to reduce the cost of labour, or higher prices to allow firms to keep more staff on their books.

Criticising MPs on all sides, Ms Meadows said the welfare-to-work policies presently on the table would only scratch the surface of the unemployment problem.

Job subsidies and training aimed at the long-term unemployed are also of limited value, the paper argues. "Active labour market policies are unlikely to generate additional employment, except to the extent that they lead to a faster filling of hard-to-fill vacancies."

The Rowntree paper also questions the present emphasis on job-specific, vocational training, arguing that personal skills, such as initiative and flexibility are more important.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SETS

Australia 1,985.0	France 7.47	Italy 2,410	Singapore 2,125
Austria 15,200	Germany 2,182.5	Japan 2,542.5	South Africa 5,747
Belgium 44.50	Greece 368.00	Netherlands 2,450.0	Spain 123.50
Canada 2.08	Hong Kong 11.78	New Zealand 2,233	Sweden 10,555
Cyprus 0.7025	India 56.51	Norway 9.57	Switzerland 1,782.5
Denmark 8.42	Ireland 10,950	Portugal 227.50	Turkey 84,942
Finland 0.88	Israel 4.78	Saudi Arabia 5.75	USA 1,512.5

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel).

Drug firm's £250m warning

Roger Cowe

THE drugs company SmithKline Beecham warned yesterday that it faced a £250 million bill for fines and legal settlements in the United States.

The company, which sells Aquafresh toothpaste, Panadol, Ribena and Lucozade, as well as being a leading supplier of prescription drugs, said it was facing a \$60 million (£35 million) settlement from an anti-trust suit by small pharmacists, with other litigation in progress.

But the major headache comes from an industry-wide inquiry by the Department of Health and Human Services into clinical tests it says should not have been paid for by health programmes.

The payments by the government to SmithKline for conducting the tests may be actionable under the Civil False Claims Act, in which case the company may have to pay compensation.

"Say the claims amount to \$1 million," said the chief executive, Jan Leschly. "We could have to pay three times that amount. Then the court could require us to pay a sum of between \$5 and \$10 per claim. Well, last year we processed 10 million."

SmithKline insisted yesterday that "substantially all" claims were justified and said it was working closely



Hold tight... SmithKline Beecham chief Jan Leschly says a government inquiry might cost the firm dear

PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK MARTIN

with the US government. But if agreement cannot be reached, the dispute will go to trial.

The £250 million cost of these disputes has been provided for against the group's 1995 profits, announced yesterday. The provision detracted from the soaring fi-

nancial performance, which saw profits rise by 7 per cent to £1.4 billion after sales grew 17 per cent with the help of huge takeovers in 1994.

Investors were also unnerved by news of a shake-up in the group's share structure, which is unusually complicated as a result of the

1989 merger of Beecham with SmithKline Beecham.

It is now planned to convert to a normal approach of ordinary UK shares with American Depository Receipts for US investors.

Mr Leschly explained that this would make it easier for the group to issue new

shares, which raised concerns among some investors that the group was preparing to follow its 1994 buying spree, when it spent \$5 billion acquiring Sterling Health and the US pharmacy benefit manager, DPS.

Worries about the implications helped to drive down

the group's share price by 17.5p to 714.5p. This was despite an optimistic report from Mr Leschly, who said that surging sales from a clutch of new products had overcome the decline in sales of the ulcer drug Tagamet, which has now lost patent protection.

Thorn EMI opts for a single note as music arm splits from rentals

Patrick Donovan
reports on the latest conglomerate to plan a demerger

THORN EMI, one of the biggest players in the international music business with the recording rights ranging from The Beatles to Janet Jackson and Supergrass, yesterday announced that its 27.3 billion leisure-to-entertainment empire is to demerge.

Chairman Sir Colin Southgate plans to separate the music and record shop business from Thorn's consumer and rental arms as two stock market companies.

This widely-expected move will turn Thorn EMI, the latest group looking to maximise shareholder value by splitting up quoted conglomerates into tightly-focused individual businesses.

The music arm, which saw its top 27 titles sell more than one million albums each over the past nine months, will become the main company. The business, to be renamed EMI, will also include the HMV record chain.

EMI looks certain to be the subject of a huge bid in the stock market's biggest stand-alone music op-

eration. With international hits such as the Beatles Anthology which has now sold nine million copies and Queen's Made In Heaven album, the business is regarded as a natural acquisition for leading entertainment groups such as Disney, Rupert Murdoch's News Corp and the fledgling Dreamworks Studio.

Sir Colin insisted that, despite widespread industry speculation, he had not received a serious take-over offer for the business. Any predator would have to pay "maxi-maxi dollar", the chairman added. But leading analysts regard a take-over bid as virtually certain. "I don't think there's much chance of EMI being independent 18 months from now", said Ron Littleboy at Nomura.

No value is being put on the music business, but analysts reckon that its shares will be worth around 12 if existing shares in the combined company were valued at £17. Yesterday the shares dipped 16p to 1653p.

Thorn EMI investors will also get shares in the rentals and consumer durables business which is to be spun off into a company to be called Thorn.

The aim is to put the demerger proposal to shareholders on July 26 with the stock market dealing in the two companies beginning three days later.

Sir Colin, who disclosed

last summer that the company was considering a demerger, said Thorn EMI announced the plan after getting the approval of the UK tax authorities. An agreement still has to be reached with the US fiscal authorities, although no difficulties were envisaged.

Thorn, meanwhile, announced that group pre-tax profits for the nine months to December 31 increased from £342.5 million to £490 million. Profits at EMI Music increased by nearly 23 per cent to £310 million. Chart successes included Supergrass' I Should Coco and Blur's The Great Escape".

Demerging

What goes where after the company is split.

Thorn

- Radio Rentals: UK & Australian electronics rental chain.
- Rent-A-Center: North American household rental & retail chain.
- Crazy George's: US & European household rental & retail chain.
- Thorn Lighting

Turnover: £m

1994	1511.6
1995	1589.4

Operating profits: £m

1994	130.2
1995	152.4

EMI

- Virgin Music
- EMI Music: Publishing
- HMV: Record shops
- Diffons: Book retailers
- EMI record labels: including Parlophone, Capitol & Chrysalis.

Turnover: £m

1994	2164.4
1995	2692.2

Operating profits: £m

1994	252.2
1995	308.9

Retiring may be Lord Sheppard's hardest disposal, says Dan Atkinson

SHEPHERD Tuesday, as one of Lord Sheppard's shareholders reminded him yesterday, is a time for reflection on past sins. And however hard his lordship tried to bow out on a high note, Grand Metropolitan's misdeeds kept on haunting him.

There were the infamous "zero hour" contracts at Burger King where workers were paid only for time spent serving the supposedly-onerous leases issued to publicans in its entrepreneur joint-venture pub estate; the "naked women", allegedly pressed into service to promote Grand Met's liquor; and then there was the becalmed share price.

Indeed, as his ninth and final stint chairing Grand Met's annual meeting progressed at the Grosvenor House Hotel in London, Lord Sheppard may have wished secretly he had spent the last decade running a relatively uncontroversial company, British Gas, for instance.

Nevertheless, the Sheppard inheritance at Grand Met was undeniable. Long gone are Watney Mann & Truman and the Express dairy. In their place are, according to one shareholder, "junk food and alcohol", or, as Grand Met prefers, "a portfolio of inter-

national brands". Lord Sheppard addressed the meeting standing in front of a huge map that showed the whole world going Grand Met.

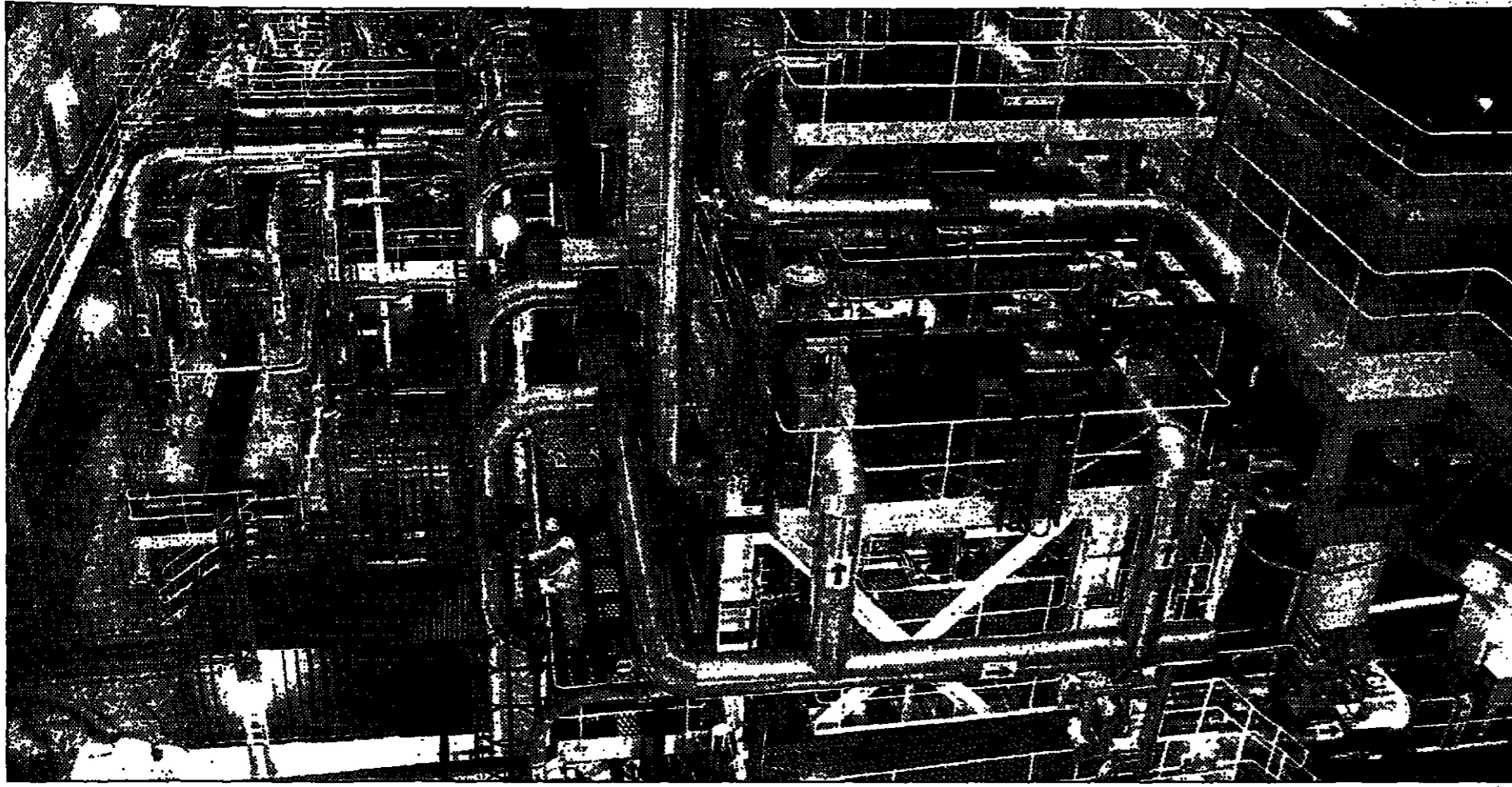
J&B whisky would seem to have conquered Zaire, while Haagen-Dazs ice cream was stamped all over Mongolia, inner and outer. With Belley's Irish cream in apparent possession of western Russia, only Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Taiwan (worryingly, the fastest-growing economies in the world) seemed Met-free zones.

Not forgetting debts of honour at home too. Lord Sheppard, one of John Major's strongest corporate fan(s), remained a shareholder in "We've been fortunate to have a government that has encouraged enterprise."

And what enterprise the Sheppard regime has seen 28 billion-worth of non-core businesses disposed of in nine years, radical "brain surgery" (the chairman's words) to focus the group on drinks and foodstuffs. Often, he confided, the shake-up had been "emotionally and intellectually difficult".

Back in 1986-87 he had asked should Grand Met exist at all? More recently, he had thought whether the two parts of the company should be demerged. That was all history. Now he was retiring. Or was he? "I'm going in a week," he said, then later: "I'm leaving in two weeks."

Perhaps his own chairmanship is proving the toughest disposal of all.



For sale... Sizewell B power station in Suffolk may be on Duke Power's shopping list

PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK MARTIN

Why Duke is eyeing UK atom plants

GREGORY PALAST in New York looks at the controversial US power producer

WHEN the British government decided to put its newest atomic reactors up for sale, Duke Power would have been among the first to hear. One of America's largest investor-owned electricity utilities, Duke Power of Charlotte, North Carolina, already has an aggressive programme of national and overseas diversification to sidestep tight profit limits imposed by the US regulators. Britain's reac-

tors must seem a tailor-made commercial opportunity. Named after its founder — the tobacco baron James "Buck" Duke — the company operates the second-largest private nuclear power system in the US. Its three nuclear reactors account for more than half of Duke's \$12.9 billion in assets. In 1983, the company purchased most of Argentina's power grid. Duke's chairman, William Grigg, has continued the move abroad by joining

Japan's Mitsui Corporation to build a \$2.5 billion power plant in Indonesia. At home Duke serves 1.7 million customers in North and South Carolina, with \$4.4 billion in annual sales. The company carries a high debt load — more than \$7 billion — representing 59 per cent of its capital. The overall return on stockholders' capital, 13 per cent, reflects the limit of 12.5 per cent placed on the utility's core business by North Carolina state regulators. An analyst at one rating agency praised Duke Power as "one of the best plant operators in the US, just excel-

lent". However, he voiced concerns that Duke's nuclear knowledge might not carry over easily from American to British reactors. But Duke Power is already well known to the British nuclear power industry. Along with British Nuclear Fuels, the waste management company, it was embroiled in a costly debacle before America's nuclear regulators. Seeking to build a uranium enrichment plant in the US, the British firm, with Dutch and German operators in the joint venture Urenco, engaged Duke Power to build the plant. Duke chose to site it in Louisiana, amid towns populated by impoverished African-Americans. It remains un-built, after seven years of hearings over charges of racial discrimination. Government regulators cited Duke for improperly attempting to charge its Carolina electricity customers for \$9 million of the costs of the Urenco project. The company also faces a \$200 million bill to replace the entire steam generating system at two of its three dual-plutonium nuclear stations. Moody's Investor Services estimates that even before the cost of these repairs, the company had invested \$1.7 billion

more in the generating plants than they are worth. Meanwhile, the consumer organisation Public Citizen of Washington DC has warned that reactor pressure vessels at the company's Oconee nuclear station are so brittle that they could violate "fracture toughness" standards. Duke produces most of its electricity from coal, and its coalfield confrontations earned it a reputation for hostility towards trade unions. Despite expansion, the company has continued to slash its workforce, from nearly 20,000 in 1990 to 15,000 today. Gregory Palast specialises in the economics of utility regulation.

News in brief

WPP jump in profits is boost for Sorrell

A JUMP of a third in profits at WPP, the world's largest advertising and marketing services company, boosted Martin Sorrell's prospects of securing his \$38 million pay package over five years. The once debt-burdened group is also now strong enough to consider either a boost to the level of its dividend or a buy-back of shares to increase shareholder value. The group, whose agencies include Ogilvy & Mather, J Walter Thompson, and Cole & Weber, had net cash of £71 million at the end of 1995, against net debt of £38 million a year earlier. Its total debt came down by \$54 million to £214 million in a year which saw profits rise 33 per cent to £113.7 million. At one stage yesterday WPP shares hit 188p — a four-year high — Tony May

Watchdog chides Swab Gas

SWEB GAS has again fallen foul of the official watchdog, the Gas Consumers Council. After being told by the GCC that it was under investigation by trading standards officers over complaints about high-pressure doorstep sales tactics, Swab Gas, owned by the US-controlled electricity provider for the south west of England, placed an advertisement in a local newspaper claiming that after contacting 400,000 west country customers about gas contracts, only 616 complaints had been received. However, the GCC last night reported that it had already received 22 complaints about the company's marketing practices. — Tony May

Drugs firm makes £79m

GROWING sales of Medeva's anti-hypertensive drug methyldopa pushed profits of the UK's fourth-largest drugmaker up 23 per cent to £79 million in 1995. Sales of the drug, which jumped 34 per cent last year, are expected to grow further this year. Last month Medeva's shares slid after a US report showed tests had produced a weak toxicity signal on Ciba-Geigy's Ritalin — the branded version of methyldopa. Bill Bogie, the chief executive, said there were no signs that doctors were turning against the product, which regulatory authorities say is safe. Mr Bogie said Medeva would continue with its current strategy of buying in products, licences and distributors. — Tony May

Argyll cuts partnership

SAFeway supermarket group Argyll has severed its shareholding links with its continental partners, but says this is because of the strength of its commercial relationships with Ahold of the Netherlands and the French chain Casino. The three companies set up the European Retail Alliance in 1989 and cemented the deal with small cross-shareholdings — in Argyll's case 2.7 per cent of its shares were bought by its continental partners. Those shares were sold yesterday. The alliance has delivered innovations such as Safeway's self-scanning technology. — Roger Cove

Mobiles switch off

TWO of the most widely-hyped growth industries — mobile phones and on-line services — yesterday got the thumbs down from research groups. London-based CIT Research warned that falling equipment prices and subscriber tariffs will limit the profits growth of UK mobile phone operators, while US researchers Forrester forecast that on-line services such as CompuServe and America Online will decline as consumers and information providers switch to the Internet. CIT, whose gloomy view of the mobile industry comes just weeks before Orange is due to be floated on the stock market, forecasts that industry revenue will peak at the turn of the century and then fall steadily. — Nicholas Bannister

Fewer going bust

BANKRUPTCIES and company liquidations in England and Wales have fallen to their lowest level since the start of the recession, figures released yesterday show. But in issuing the data, accountants KPMG warned: "The rate of decline is slowing down, and continued political uncertainty will not help." During 1995, 21,933 individuals were declared bankrupt, a 14.4 per cent drop on 25,834 in 1994 and the lowest level since 1990, when 12,068 bankruptcies were recorded. Meanwhile, company liquidations totalled 14,289 in 1995, an 11 per cent drop on 16,061 in 1994 and, again, the lowest figure since 1990, which saw a figure of 14,508. — Dan Atkinson

Courtaulds textile success

COURTAULDS said yesterday that demand for its new textile fibre Tenocal had grown so fast that it was now profitable and the company was accelerating plans for production at Grimsby. Existing demand will use the capacity of the expanded production lines at Mobile, Alabama, so Grimsby will be built at full capacity and production will begin in the middle of next year. Elsewhere in the chemical group, acrylic and viscose fibre prices are returning to normal levels, but demand is weak, as it is in coatings and sealants. Profit margins in coatings and sealants also remain depressed. — Roger Cove

Row erupts over revealing directors' pension payouts

Lisa Buckingham and Roger Cowe report on a heated disclosure debate

BITTER divisions on corporate governance widened yesterday when the powerful National Association of Pension Funds demanded fuller disclosure of directors' pension payments. Its intervention came as Sir Ronnie Hampel, who has taken up the baton from the Cadbury and Greenbury committees, attempted to play down expectations of further radical change. The battle over directors' pensions stems from the recommendation of the Greenbury committee on top pay that companies

should reveal more about directors' pension packages. Meanwhile, leading industrialists have been fighting a fierce rearguard action to prevent detailed disclosure of their benefits. Sir Ronnie, whose new committee is charged with reviewing the impact of both Cadbury and Greenbury, said yesterday: "The actual degree of accuracy depends on disclosure. We are now publishing too much detail. It should be about having sensible and intelligent disclosure." But the NAPF hit out yesterday at attempts to water down the Greenbury recommendations. NAPF chairman, Tom Ross, said: "What should be disclosed to shareholders with respect to the extra pension earned by a pay increase is an amount which is the effective cost to the company." The "accrued benefit sys-

tem" is one of five reporting options put forward by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries last month to try and reach a consensus. The other options are: Cash: this is the unadmitted, widely used, present system. It is regarded as failing to reflect the pension benefit to directors or the cost to companies. A National Fund: this is seen as a rather arcane system but would probably provide the most even spread of contributions needed to build up an individual's fund. A SSAP24 based on the accounting standard for reporting pension costs, this is the method endorsed by the NAPF and is related to cash equivalents and notional funding. The NAPF sees it as realistic, fair to directors and able to provide worthwhile information to shareholders and the public. It reveals the cost of providing a pension in a so-called normal funding charge. It tries to deal with larger-than-

allowed-for salary increases by capitalising them and then spreading the cost over a number of years. Although it will reveal the 21 million or so cost of providing an executive with a whopping pay rise one year before retirement, it will not open directors to public opprobrium if they are given a substantial merit increase in their mid-50s when the pension fund has, say, another eight years to fund that rise. The debate is becoming increasingly steamy, but actuaries such as John Shuttleworth at Coopers & Lybrand say the issue should be clear. "The wording of the Greenbury recommendations was not an accident," he said. "They called for reporting to quantify 'the value of the extra pension entitlement earned during the year'."

This is in almost total opposition to the CBI/IoD views which have just won backing from the mighty Prudential, the country's biggest fund manager. The industrialists are supporting a proposal which would provide American-style disclosure of pension benefits. It would not show how much companies

'Greenbury called for reporting the value of pension entitlement earned each year'

paid to provide directors with their pensions, nor what the value of the pension was to the individual. Instead, annual reports would show any increase or decrease in the expected pension payment on retirement as a result of the year's transactions. The "accrued benefit sys-

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Soft soap in Unilever's stand on prices

Outlook

Pauline Springett

SIR Michael Perry, chairman of Anglo-Dutch consumer products group Unilever, was most insistent yesterday. The company was its own boss when it came to the pricing of its products. Recent price cuts by arch rival Procter & Gamble would have "no specific impact" on Unilever. You can understand Sir Michael's point of view. It was important to send out a clear message that Unilever was not being forced to react to notices made by P&G and he did his best to turn attention towards the company's 1995 results, which showed a 4 per cent fall in pre-tax profits at £2.8 billion (prompting a 17p drop in the share-price to 123p).

He talked through the details of the company's performance around the world with a whole variety of products, from soaps to bath gel. He also grappled with the effects of what seems to be a recurring restructuring charge in the accounts but it was of little avail. In the UK, it is Unilever's soap powder business that grabs attention. P&G's recent change in pricing strategy simply intensified the interest. The American company, the world's largest household products group, is trying to adopt the concept of everyday low pricing in the UK. The strategy is to introduce sharp price cuts, which restore, or at least shore up market share, and the cuts should be a permanent feature, not a temporary gimmick.

It worked for P&G in the US. Whether it will work in the UK is open to debate since

the market is different to the US, being more influenced by powerful supermarkets, but that does not alter the fact that Unilever, whenever its public stand, will have to be able to respond if P&G does unveil widespread, swinging price cuts. Critics might suggest that Sir Michael's lofty pronouncement on prices is already looking rather hollow. Its Lever Brothers arm has just sliced 10p off the price of its Persil washing up liquid in response to P&G's 10p reduction of Fairy. A Lever Brothers spokesman said no other price cuts were planned and the washing up liquid cut was a one-off. "We will remain competitive and offer value for money," she said.

Analysts believe that, up to a point, Unilever is ready for battle. Firstly, as it has demonstrated, the group is not above cutting prices itself. John Elston, an analyst at Panmure Gordon, also believes the company is adopting a "pragmatic" approach to strategy, whereby it can fund lower prices with the help of cost cutting and cuts in advertising. That appeared to tie in with the picture Sir Michael was trying to paint. He insisted that Unilever had undertaken a "constant drive" over the

years to reduce costs and to obtain operating efficiencies which could be passed on to the consumer in the form of lower prices. In periods of low inflation, such as the UK is now enjoying, that meant that prices

money. "The net benefit is lower real prices for consumers year on year," he said. Mr Elston added that both P&G and Unilever would be careful not to slash prices down to the level of their own brand goods because that would endanger the value of their brands in the public's perception. He added that he was hopeful that a current internal review at Unilever, which is looking at strategy, would produce positive results. In the long term, he believed the company might do well to sharpen focus and concentrate on fewer big brands. "It has over 1,000 important brands. Do you need that many? The answer must be no," he said.

'It will have to be able to respond if P&G unveils widespread, swinging cuts'

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HAGGAS			
JOHN HAGGAS PLC			
INTERIM STATEMENT			
	6 months to	6 months to	Year to
	31.12.95	31.12.94	30.6.95
	£'000	£'000	£'000
	(audited)	(audited)	(audited)
Net turnover	20649	18612	39961
Profit before taxation	1003	1152	2591
Taxation	-331	-380	-831
Profit attributable to shareholders	672	772	1720
Interim dividend	-331	-319	-658
Retained profit	341	453	1062
Earnings per share	3.1p	3.5p	7.9p
DIVIDEND			
An interim dividend of 1.5p per share will be paid on the 25th April 1996 to shareholders registered on 19th March 1996.			

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£25,000+	5.75	5.60
£10,000+	5.50	5.37
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£50,000+	5.60	5.46
£25,000+	5.50	5.37
£10,000+	5.30	5.18
£5,000+	4.65	4.55
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Handwritten signature: *John Elston*

Rugby League

Wigan accused of binge

Paul Fitzpatrick

WIGAN'S players have been accused of indulging in a drinking binge in Tenerife, more than a week before their shock Challenge Cup defeat by Salford.

An unnamed player collapsed in a coma after an all-night drinking session at the Cattle Harbour apartments in Los Cristianos, said the Wigan Observer, quoting the resort's manager. The players were also accused of rowdy behaviour.

The holiday was approved by Wigan's coach Graeme West, whose players had a two-week break between cup ties after they defeated Bramley.

Jack Robinson, Wigan's chairman, said he could not comment because he knew nothing about the alleged incident. "First of all we will have to find out if they are guilty of any misdemeanours or not. I do not want to criticise anybody without knowing the true facts of the case."

"Of course it worries me if any member of the Wigan club is accused of misbehaving, and if the story is true we will take the necessary steps," he said.

West said: "The players were given a week off but they were back in time to put in a full week's training before the Salford game."

Wigan's Andy Farrell was yesterday named as England captain for the World Cup Nines in Fiji, and his club-mate, the hooker Martin Hall, was handed the Wales post.

Farrell, who replaces the injured Denis Betts, has just returned to full fitness after hernia surgery and two months' absence in Australia, meanwhile, have called up Kevin Walters, Glen Lazarus and Matt Croker for the injured Allan Langer, Mark Geyer and Bradley Clyde.

Any player who tests positive for anabolic steroids in future will receive an immediate two-year ban. A second offence would result in a lifetime suspension. The procedure, which follows the International Olympic Committee's charter on drug abuse, was adopted yesterday at the Super League International Board meeting in Fiji.

Several rule changes have also been adopted, including the "zero tackle". When a player fields an opposition kick and runs the ball back without passing or kicking it, the tackle will not count. This is intended to keep the ball in play and to discourage the fashion of allowing kicks to roll dead, whereby defenders got possession from the scrum without using up a tackle.

When a defending player does not deliberately play at a kicked ball which deflects off him into touch, his team will retain the scrum feed. This is intended to stop players deliberately kicking the ball at an opponent to gain the feed.

Stealing the ball, one of the game's greyest grey areas, will now be allowed but only in one-on-one tackles, and in internationals the four substitutes currently retained will be increased to six interchanges will be allowed.

And in future a touring country will honour the hosts' disciplinary procedures. Previously the manager of the tourists had to be involved.

Athletics

Female winner is a male loser

FILIPINO sports administrators have a problem with Nancy Navalta, a student from northern Pangasinan province who entered a sprint race as a male and the following week won as a female.

Beaten soundly in the men's race, Navalta last week returned as a woman and won five races, earning a place in the Filipino championships in April.

Inquiries have established that the midwife who delivered Navalta certified that the baby was female. The birth certificate also specifies female, but there is speculation that the now muscular Navalta had an underdeveloped sex organ that could easily be missed by an untrained midwife in a remote town.

Last year Navalta underwent a gender test. The results were submitted to the IAAF but not made public, though her family was told the results and the runner was advised not to compete again, either as a male or a female.

WORLD CUP CRICKET

Barclay plays down storm in a cup of tea

Mike Selvey in Peshawar sees spin doctors hype up England bribe charge

ON THE subcontinent, where public office frequently is a byword for corruption and where the length of airline queues can be measured in dollars, bribery is not unknown. Yesterday, however, a finger was pointed not at dodgy government contractors or the accomplices of Bombay bookmakers but at the England team.

An article in a Pakistani national newspaper, the Frontier Post, was headlined "England at it, again" (again?) and alleged that the groundsman at the stadium here was offered inducements on Monday to let England practise on a strip alongside the one to be used for tomorrow's match against Holland, thereby against Holland, thereby against the first-hand knowledge of the surface.

Ignoring the fact that England should already have gleaned such knowledge from Sunday's match against the Emirates, the unnamed author of the piece describes the shifty behaviour of senior team members — among them, apparently, Graeme Hick, Robin Smith and a bowler whom the writer did not recognise — when the alleged offer was refused.

"They crisscrossed with palpable embarrassment when approached by the official," said the article. "The official, much to the chagrin of the English cricketers, not only outright refused permission to the players, he also gave them a good deal of dressing down." So there.

In a part of the world well known for spinners, it is the spin doctors who have been at work on this one, perhaps as an early riposte to the ball-tampering row when Pakistan were last in England.

Indeed, the accusations are what is known here as a storm in a cup of tea, and the Super League International Board meeting in Fiji. Barclay played them down, the equivalent of the bomb squad defusing a Roman candle.

"We cannot deny that we

made requests to practise on an adjacent strip on the square," he admitted. "We didn't expect permission, but with the net wicket unsatisfactory it would have been unprofessional not to have tried to get better facilities."

"I said that if there was any extra cost involved we would be more than happy to cover it. I suppose it could be misconstrued, but to describe it as bribery is totally false and hurtful to the good relationship we have had out here."

A more pertinent question for the Frontier Post to ask might be why, on a ground staging two World Cup matches, more attention had not been paid to the provision of proper practice wickets, on the main square if necessary. Goodness knows, England need that after their lacklustre displays against New Zealand and the Emirates.

Against the Dutch tomorrow England have a final opportunity to get things right in preparation for the matches against South Africa and Pakistan, one of which they need to win if they are to avoid finishing bottom of the qualifiers in Group B and thereby condemned to a Faisalabad quarter-final against the top side from Group A.

Although Holland were well beaten by New Zealand in their first match their potential for embarrassment (at least on Dutch matting) is well known to England, who lost to them twice in unofficial matches in 1989 and 1993. They are no pushovers.

Their side has a cosmopolitan element and includes the Barbadian Nolan Clarke, at 47 the oldest man in the tournament, Peter Cantrell, an opening bat from Queensland, and Flavio Aponso from Sri Lanka. And although batting is their strength they have a pair of experienced county seamers in Paul-John Baker and Roland Lefebvre, some decent spin from Aponso and the captain Steven Lubbers, and an excellent keeper in Marcel Sheve.

England will not be naming a side until tomorrow morning, with doubts about the fitness of Hick and Robin Smith, and Neil Smith not fully recovered from the sickness that caused him to retire during his innings against the Emirates.



Donald delight... Chris Cairns sees his stumps shattered by South Africa's pace bowler

Germon angry as Kiwis drop back

LEE GERMON, the New Zealand captain, called his team's display "amateurish" after South Africa yesterday confirmed themselves as one of the World Cup favourites, comfortably winning by five wickets in Faisalabad against England's conquerors.

South Africa's captain Hansie Cronje lifted the Group B match with an impressive 78 as his side, replying to New Zealand's 177 for nine, showed some early aggression to race home with 12.3 overs to spare. South Africa, who will meet England in Rawalpindi on Sunday, were watched by a pally crowd of just over 2,000 as they reached 178 for five off 57.3 overs to displace New Zealand at the top of the group.

The Kiwis, despite their lowly score, might have made it a contest had they not dropped three possible catches from South Africa's

opening pair in the first eight overs. Steve Pafraiman was given two lives and Gary Kirsten one and they took advantage of their good fortune to put on 41 in nine overs.

But it was an aggressive innings by the next man in, Cronje, which carried his side to their seventh successive one-day international victory. The captain, who had made 57 in the win against the United Arab Emirates in Rawalpindi last Friday, plundered his half-century of 36 balls, including six fours and two sixes, the second of which brought up the half-century.

It was the fastest 50 of the World Cup, eclipsing Chris Cairns's 47-ball effort for New Zealand against the Netherlands last Saturday. Cronje was eventually out in Nathan Astle's first over, caught by Stephen Fleming for 78 off 64 balls. Astle also took the wicket of Daryll Cullinan, again playing a

supporting role, for 27. New Zealand had failed to make a successful start in their innings after Germon won the toss and elected to bat on the Iqbal Stadium's flat strip. Astle was run out for one in the second over in another mix-up with his fellow opener Craig Spearman, as had happened in the previous match against the Dutch.

The South Africa fielders made two more run-outs with direct hits and shelled the batsman with tight fielding and bowling. Fleming was New Zealand's top scorer with 33 before being bowled by Brian McMillan, and Germon made a valiant effort to end the innings with a flourish, hitting 31 not out.

Allan Donald took three for 84 in 10 overs but the off-spinner Pat Symcox, playing his first World Cup match, was the pick of the bowlers, conceding only 25 runs off his 10 overs.

Table with cricket statistics including batting and bowling figures for both teams. Columns include player names, runs, wickets, and other stats.

Zimbabwe given VIP security

ZIMBABWE yesterday arrived where Australia and West Indies feared to tread, when they flew in to Colombo for today's Group B match against Sri Lanka. They were taken to a seafront hotel amid security normally reserved for visiting heads of state.

Whatever the result of the game, Sri Lanka are virtually assured a quarter-final place after Australia and West Indies withdrew from their matches, and forfeited the points, in the wake of the terrorist bomb in Colombo last month that killed more than 80 people.

"It's not the way we wanted to get points," said Sri Lanka's manager Duleep Mendis. "We'd rather play and lose than get forfeited points."

Racing

Party time at Haydock

Chris Hawkins

WHILE the latest bout of wintry weather is threatening any activity on the jumping front in the south, Haydock Park has escaped the snow and Saturday's Greenalls Grand National Trial seems more likely than Kempton's Racing Festival to get a reviver.

This is good news considering prizemoney has been doubled to £80,000, making Haydock's three and a half mile handicap the fifth most valuable chase of the season and, with a £55,000 bonus linked to the Martell Grand National, it would be a grievous blow if the race were lost.

Horses need only finish in the first three in the Greenalls to stand a chance of picking up the bonus by winning at Aintree but so far it has never been paid out.

Party Politics won at Haydock in 1993 but that was the year of the great Grand National fiasco when the race was never run. In 1992 he race was never run. In 1992 he race was never run.

but Lo Stregone or Unguiled Missile (also engaged in the Racing Post) are the likely favourites.

Christopher Mordant, responsible for the Grand National weights, was accused of ruining the Aintree spectacular by Don Bruce at yesterday's annual general meeting of the Betting Office Licencing Association.

Bruce, who is retiring as chairman of BOLA after 14 years, said: "There are only 17 runners in the handicap proper this year and it is being ruined as a betting race. If you have a Gold Cup winner like Master Oats in the race he should get at least 12st."

Many would agree with Bruce's view and few would be surprised by the assessment of BOLA's director general Tom Kelly that the National Lottery poses a serious threat to bookmakers and racing.

"We needed a two per cent cut just to stand still," said Kelly. "The lottery and its scratch cards are the biggest threat to off-course betting since shops were opened in 1961."

Walter Swinburn may be released from hospital at the weekend following his life-threatening fall in Hong Kong. "He is off oxygen and morphine and is making good progress now," said the jockey's father, Wally.

Wolverhampton all-weather Flat card with form

Table containing racing results and form guides for Wolverhampton all-weather Flat races. Includes race numbers, names of horses, jockeys, and trainers.

Boxing

Sky cool on Bruno pay-TV

Andrew Gull Media Correspondent

SKY Sports may be backtracking on plans to charge up to £30 for the Bruno-Tyson fight, Britain's first pay-per-view sports event.

Executives at Rupert Murdoch's satellite channel have yet to make a public announcement about plans to impose an additional charge on subscribers for the eagerly awaited WBC heavyweight title fight on March 16 between Britain's Bruno, the holder, and Tyson in Las Vegas.

The American promoter Don King, who has staged dozens of big pay-per-view fights in the United States, has insisted on this format for Bruno-Tyson. But his business partners at BSkyB are not so sure and have been trying to drum up a value-for-money package to attract the blow for viewers who already pay more than £20 a month in subscription fees for the service.

Yesterday it appeared that the station might abandon the pay-per-view plan, or at least the proposed fee to about £9.95 and offer subscribers an eight-hour television spectacular. In addition to the Bruno fight, viewers would probably see the featherweight title bout from Glasgow that night between Prince Naseem Hamed and Said Lawal and a blockbuster movie to provide added value.

In an interview last month David Elstein, BSkyB's head of programming, said the channel would do a deal with a major pay-per-view event in March, although he said it might be a movie rather than boxing.

Since then the climate has changed, with a fierce campaign against BSkyB's increasing dominance of television sport and Government defeat in the House of Lords, designed to ensure access on mainstream television to eight major listed events.

An industry insider said yesterday: "Sky's executives must be very concerned that Britain is not quite ready for pay-per-view and fear a public backlash."

"It looks like they are trying to sweeten the pot by halving the original £20 fee and turning March 16 into a feast of boxing plus a film. But it is getting very late to announce it."

Joe Bugner, 45 next month, suffered a new setback yesterday when the British Boxing Board of Control rejected a second application by his promoter Frank Warren for the former British heavyweight champion to fight Scott Welch in Britain.

Bugner, whose recent comeback saw him win the Australian heavyweight title, had hoped to challenge Welch for the WBO Inter-Continental title in Glasgow on March 16, lastly tying in with the televised Bruno-Tyson and Hamed-Lawal fights.

Warren may now take the Bugner fight to the Republic of Ireland, which is outside the Board's jurisdiction.

Results

IT was a topsy-turvy day for Frankie Detorri at Lingfield yesterday. In the opening race he finished third on Shanghai Girl (2-5) and then won the following event, only for his horse to dump him on the sand after passing the winning post.

Sweet Supposin was always going well the final furlong to score by a length from Zahid, but as Detorri was pulling up the five-year-old jinked and unseated him but he was soon on his feet unscathed.

LINGFIELD 2.30 FRESH COCKLEDS LINDY, V Smith (14-1), 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

4.00 BANNY ACRYL GELANDER LINDY, V Smith (14-1), 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

4.30 LINDY GELANDER LINDY, V Smith (14-1), 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

5.00 LINDY GELANDER LINDY, V Smith (14-1), 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

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Soccer

Hands off English system, Uefa told

Russell Thomas
RICK PARRY, the Premier League's chief executive, warned Uefa that English football would fight to protect its transfer system in the wake of the Jean-Marc Bosman judgment.

players in Uefa's three club competitions. Uefa's worried executive is trying to formulate new concepts to cope with the ramifications of Bosman and of fresh European Commission examination of domestic transfer systems.

home-grown players. Taylor has suggested two to four indigenous players per side. Such limits could place obvious restrictions on transfers, and although English football at large recognises the need to protect its home-produced players, the Premier League and English League will fight any Uefa attempt to railroad changes.

that it will inevitably deflate current transfer fees. The sweeping away of the three-plus-two foreigner restrictions will also remove the premium placed on good English players.

agreement to scrap the three-plus-two — three foreigners, two assimilated players — restriction in its European Cup.

Uncertainty remains, however, because the surviving clubs in the three competitions have voluntarily agreed to keep the traditional limit for the rest of this campaign.

A Taylor-made vacancy crops up at Watford

Russell Thomas
GRAHAM TAYLOR was last night being tipped to take charge of Watford, almost 10 years after leaving the club at which he made his managerial name.

ford player who returned to the club after managing Gillingham, said: "I am sure I have learned from this experience."

Modern world of the East End boys

Paul Weaver asks Iain Dowie about the cosmopolitan look of West Ham

FOOTBALL does not get more English than West Ham, the club of Bobby Moore and Alf Garnett, where relegation and good football are never far away, where bubbles float and burst in the chill east London air and the average supporter seems about 43 years old.

Yesterday the players had completed their morning's work at their training headquarters at Chadwell Heath and were eating platefuls of baked beans on toast washed down by mugs of steaming tea.

Outside, the autograph hunters waited, cold but patient and huddled together like mourners in the snow. Beside them were the ordinary vehicles to be found in any Premiership car park: Fords, Vauxhalls, a Toyota and an old Peugeot.

Ron Greenwood and John Lyall frowned at players who drove flash cars and appeared to have cast an austere shadow over the driving habits of the current team.

So little has changed that it is easy to slip into a nostalgic reverie, indulging visions of the Stiles' side of Moore, Hurst and Peters and then of the Seventies, of Brooking and Alan Devonshire. But then the wooden post-rack outside the canteen catches the eye and reminds you that times have changed. Radically.

Here can be found the names of Marc Rieper and Ludek Miklosko, Slaven Bilic, Ilie Dumitrescu and



Belfast boy... Dowie, in his second spell at Upton Park, says the foreign players are of 'real quality' and create excitement

Dani, the boy from Portugal with the looks of a matinee idol. His bundle of letters is so swollen that the wood of the rack is bent like a weary belt holding in a corpulent diner. Tonight, at St James' Park, the league leaders Newcastle play a West Ham team that looks more like a list of anagrams.

1-0 last week they had only three English players. The time when a football supporter shared a local identity with his team has long gone, but the fact that a historically non-buying club, with its family feel and home-grown talent, should have purchased more foreign players than any other shows the extent of the game's change.

Dowie, aged 31 and in his second spell with the club, says: "It's certainly changed a bit since I was here under Billy Bonds in 1991-92. It's a lot more exciting now. But we still

have plenty of local lads around, which is important because I feel a club should reflect its community. "We have bought international players of real quality. Only when the player is no better than a promising local lad should the system be questioned."

great to be back here. I never wanted to leave but I've often been sold when a club is hard up. "When I was a kid in Belfast my dad brought me over to watch West Ham. I want to finish here."

First Division: Huddersfield 2, Charlton 2

Charlton look thoroughbreds

CHARLTON'S gallop towards the Premiership may have slowed to a mere canter over the past week or so but they still look admirably equipped to earn promotion this season.

even if there is a tendency for some of the pieces to fall apart in the box. If Huddersfield are already more than competent, Charlton, their attacks neat and precise, would appear to have the capacity to be outstanding. But having made light of Huddersfield's aggression on a dodgy playing surface, Charlton conceded two goals in no time midway through the first half.

It is coming up to a quarter of a century since the Terriers of West Yorkshire last worried England's elite. Even then, back in the early Seventies, they were very much the white rose county's make-weights, perpetually scurrying around in the awesome shadow cast by Leeds United while attempting to build a respectable empire on ever-shifting sands.

Having established a foothold, Charlton suddenly felt like scaling the mountain. A second half of debatable quality was still in its infancy when they drew level, the substitute Mark Robson scored a home penalty after Jones had been cynically upended by Reid.

Table with 2 columns: Team and Score. Includes results for Premier League, First Division, and Second Division.

Table with 2 columns: Team and Score. Includes results for Football League Championship and Football League One.

Table with 2 columns: Team and Score. Includes results for Football League Two and Football League Three.

Table with 2 columns: Team and Score. Includes results for Football League Four and Football League Five.

Table with 2 columns: Team and Score. Includes results for Football League Six and Football League Seven.

Table with 2 columns: Team and Score. Includes results for Football League Eight and Football League Nine.

Weather again takes its toll

BRITISH sport's worst winter for three decades continued to play havoc with the fixture list yesterday when the brunt of the latest cold snap.

Sport in brief

Swimming: Samantha Riley, Australia's world champion at 100 and 200 metres breaststroke, last night escaped with a "strong warning" from the sport's governing body after failing a drugs test.

Teamtalk advertisement featuring the Independent News and Reports Service, contact number 0891 33 77+, and a list of football clubs and their managers.

Advertisement for the National League, featuring details about the league structure, fixtures, and contact information.

Advertisement for the Football League, featuring details about the league structure, fixtures, and contact information.

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Lynagh... record-holder

Sella and Sarries on the move

The centre plays in Enfield next season, writes Ian Malin

A SHARP-SUITED Philippe Sella was giving his umpteenth interview to a television crew yesterday. "I think we can get back into the First Division next year," said France's centre of excellence. It lost much in translation but his words were a little too close to the truth for his new club Saracens.

The north London club are desperately hoping Sella, a former captain of France, and Michael Lynagh, the one-time captain of Australia, will still be playing in the First Division when they join next September.

Saracens are uncomfortably one place above the relegation zone with five games remaining, but for now they can bask in the news that two of the world's leading players of the past decade are to join them.

The arrival of Sella, the world's most capped player — he played 111 times for France between 1982 and last summer's World Cup — follows last month's signing of Lynagh, whose 911 international points are also a world record.

The pair played against each other in the epic semi-final of the 1987 World Cup in Sydney, a game acknowledged by many to be the greatest international ever. Next season they team up for a club whose council-owned ground in Southgate is used to walk every dog in the neighbourhood during the week.

Next season Saracens will move to Southbury Road, the home of ICIS League Enfield Town soccer club. Provided they are granted planning permission the club will then move to a new £5 million purpose-built ground at Southbury Road in 1997.

These are heady days for Saracens, who until this season have seen their most talented players picked off by richer clubs. Now the recent £2.7 million injection of share capital by the



Capital's gain... Philippe Sella joins Michael Lynagh at Saracens PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARNON

property, magnate and club supporter Nigel Wray is helping the gamekeepers turn poacher.

Sella, who led his club Agen to French championships in 1982 and 1988, has signed a one-year renewable contract and Saracens will find him and his family a home.

But Mike Smith, the club's chief executive, denies reports that the glamorous new boys would be earning salaries of around £100,000. "Those figures are wide of the mark. They are not coming here for the money and won't be earning any more than our other players. Both have business arrangements in London and that has helped us persuade them to come to the capital."

In Sella's case, the former farmer intends to expand his business Sella Communications into the United Kingdom. Like Will Carling's company it is involved in team-building seminars.

Whether Saracens can build a team around Sella, who was 34 last week, and the 32-year-old Lynagh remains to be seen. "We're not looking to buy a team, but the pair can help all our players from mini-rugby level upwards. We can draw on their expertise on and off the pitch," Smith said.

Saracens have also signed the English-born former Wales lock Tony Copley from Llanelli. He and the Ireland flanker Eddie Halvey will be available for the crucial last four league games of the season. Scotland's scrum-half Bryan Redpath is another likely target.

Luckily for the club, the four new internationals will not be joined at Saracens by Peter Clohessy. The Ireland prop's agent had recently been trying to sell his services. "We felt he wasn't right for us," said the club coach Mark Evans with some understatement.

Twickenham plans to pump new life into divisionals

Robert Armstrong

DIVISIONAL rugby will appear in a new form next season if regional representatives get their way at a meeting with senior Rugby Football Union officials in London on March 22. Tony Hallett, the RFU secretary, and Cliff Brittle, the new chairman of the RFU executive, will discuss proposals for a revamped competition with managers of all four divisions.

The revival plan is directly aimed at influencing the RFU's special general meeting in Birmingham two days later which will consider the future of divisional rugby as part of its agenda on open rugby.

"I'd like to think that people in high places are beginning to hear what divisional rugby supporters have to say and perhaps to take some of our points on board," said Fran Cotton, the North manager, who guided his side to this season's CIS Divisional Championship title.

An RFU questionnaire issued among club and county representatives produced a 73 per cent vote in favour of enhancing and expanding the divisional competition. That positive response was strongest in the North and the Midlands (both 78 per cent) and weakest among clubs in the five national leagues (53 per cent).

The three-year sponsorship deal with CIS Insurance ended in December but Cotton and supporters throughout the four divisions believe the RFU should set aside the

necessary money to fund a new competition. Twickenham accepts that divisional rugby should continue in a watered-down version that does not make heavy demands on the major clubs. For their part the divisions reject suggestions that the competition should be centrally controlled by the RFU and should occupy no more than four weeks of the season.

"We must not lose sight of the value to the entire game of a winning England team, and I'm convinced the divisional tier has a crucial part to play in achieving that," explained Cotton, who will shortly address a joint meeting of the RFU executive and the League One clubs about his proposals. "To make it work, however, we need the full support of the top clubs and the best players."

Cotton's ideas are strongly endorsed by some members of the executive committee who want the RFU to assert its control and influence through the divisions and counties.

The World Cup promoter Alan Callan yesterday won substantial High Court damages for libel against Business Age magazine, which alleged profiteering and failure to reinvest significant profits from the tournament for the wider benefit of the game.

The Bath captain Phil De Glanville will take advantage of his England contract by cutting his working week to three days. The centre, a marketing consultant for a computer company, expects to earn £30,000 from international rugby this season despite spending all but 30 minutes so far on the bench.

Rugby Union

Wales set to turn down £47m lottery windfall

National Stadium revamp may be hit by row over ground control

John Duncan

THE Millennium Commission is set to announce today that it will hand out £47 million of lottery money to redevelop the National Stadium, but the Welsh Rugby Union is considering turning the money down because of the conditions attached.

The go-ahead for the project is likely to be given by the Millennium Commissioners when they meet today, but they will insist the WRU is not allowed to hold a majority on the board that will manage the stadium.

The commission wants the WRU to accept only four places on a nine-man management team, but the WRU, which has owned the site since 1993, will not agree to that. It is said to be prepared to turn down the money and leave Wales without a landmark Millennium project rather than lose

control of the ground. The project is vital for Wales. As well as the 1,600 permanent jobs that would be created, the work represents six per cent of the annual construction spend in Wales.

The WRU and South Glamorgan County Council are asking for the money as part of a £106 million redevelopment of the National Stadium that would increase capacity to 75,000 from the current 33,000. But the relationship between the WRU and council has been tense in the past few months, with the council keen to loosen the grip of the WRU over one of Cardiff's prime assets.

The WRU took the unusual step of convening a special meeting of its general committee on the morning of Saturday's international against Scotland, after it was told by the commission that a condition of advancing the money would be that the union did not control the stadium. A

WRU delegation met the commissioners on Monday with a brief to insist on WRU control of the ground.

The council now says that any conflict between itself and the WRU is over. "We and the WRU are in total agreement," said Russell Goodway, leader of the council. "We agree on the proposal before the commission. Only the WRU can provide stability to the project. If they don't own it, who's going to?"

However, the Guardian understands that there has in fact been a conflict between the WRU and local authority over the control of any new ground, and there have been suggestions that a redeveloped National Stadium could host Premiership soccer if Wimbledon could be enticed to Wales, a development the WRU would not support.

There is also the question of rugby league internationals, a sport which has been supported by the council but which has not been allowed at the National Stadium because of a condition inherited by the WRU from the Cardiff club. However, the council

claims these problems have been thrashed out. "There will be no restriction on what sports are played at a new stadium, according to our submission," said Goodway.


The commissioners will meet today to make their decision, mindful of the political storm that was whipped up in Wales last December when, having turned down the WRU's original application for funding, they refused to back the Cardiff Bay Opera House scheme.

The WRU is hosting the 1999 World Cup finals, but the redevelopment of the ground was not a condition of that award and it will stage the tournament whatever the commissioners decide.

If the ground is redeveloped with Millennium money, the WRU has agreed to move out for a season to ensure work can be completed by the summer of 1996, well in time for the finals. Wales would have to stage their home matches elsewhere and, given the lack of a decent alternative stadium in the principality, they have marked Wembley and Old Trafford as their best options.

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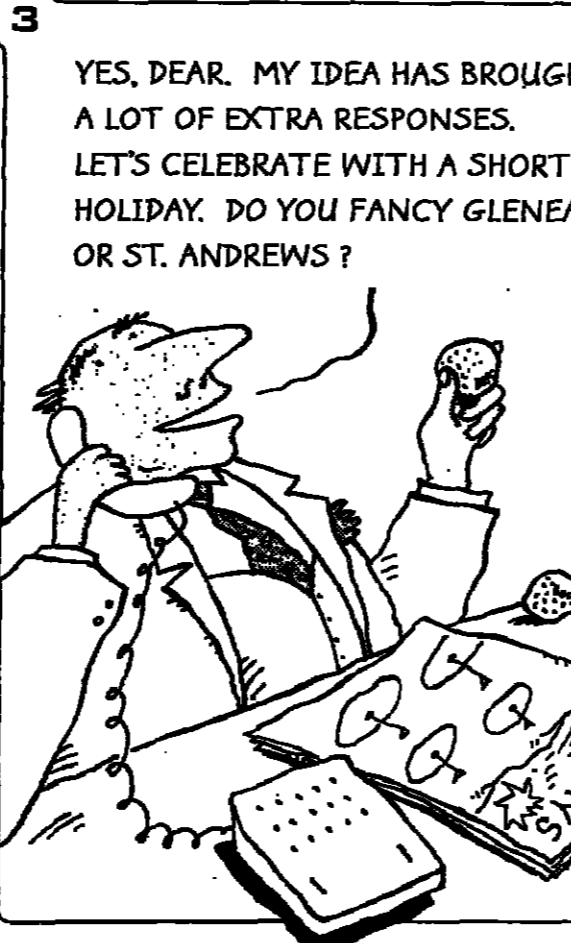
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NEW GUIDELINES MAY GIVE HOPE TO DUMITRESCU AND HOTTIGER

Whitehall review blocks transfers

Martin Thorpe and Ian Ross

THE Government has stepped into the row over the refusal to renew the work permits of Ilic Dumitrescu and Marc Hottiger and ordered a review of the whole system. As a result the Department for Education and Employment has put on hold all transfers of foreign players between English clubs, pending a summit meeting with the Premier League, Football Association, Football League and Professional Footballers' Association. The transfers of foreign players into Britain are not affected.

The review, which could take up to two weeks and will almost certainly bring changes to the criteria, was ordered by the Education and Employment minister Cheryl Gillan in an attempt to strike a balance between those factions, such as the PFA, who are worried about the growing influx of foreigners and others, such as the clubs, who want to be able to sign the best players available.

"It is important that football continues to benefit from the contribution of top-class internationals playing for British clubs while safeguarding opportunities for the development of British players," said Gillan.

It was growing concern over the effect the influx of foreigners would have on the development and job prospects of British players which prompted the department, in conjunction with the PFA, to decide this month to begin stringently applying the criteria for renewing the work permits of players moving between British clubs. A new permit is required each year or when a player moves clubs.

The current criteria stipulate that a player seeking a work permit to move to another club must have played 75 per cent of first-team games in the previous year. Dumitrescu, who was hoping to move from Tottenham to

West Ham in a £1.5 million deal, and Hottiger, moving from Newcastle to Everton for £700,000, both failed to meet this stipulation.

The department also pointed out that the work-permit system was not designed to allow a player, such as Dumitrescu, to move to another club for less money in order to get first-team football.

The counter-argument was that the Romanian Dumitrescu and the Swiss Hottiger are seasoned internationals and World Cup veterans, and both of them better players than some of those being granted work permits after arriving directly from abroad.

Yesterday the PFA's chief executive Gordon Taylor accepted that there was an anomaly. "We have been cast in the role of the big bad wolf but we are well aware of the quality of these two players. It is an anomaly that they are world class but not club class. We would be prepared to review the situation."

This will be good news for West Ham and Everton, who have both appealed against their players' work-permit refusals. In the meantime, though, there is more delay with both players unable to play competitive matches and their careers in limbo.

Peter Storrie, West Ham's managing director, said: "We are pleased the minister has asked for the review but disappointed it has taken so long to reach this point, with a further delay of up to two weeks."

Everton's manager Joe Royle said: "This is very unfortunate but, sadly, our hands are tied. By the time Hottiger is hopefully available to us we won't have many fixtures left." Hottiger's work permit does not run out until June, so long as he stays at Newcastle. But Dumitrescu's expired on December 31. If his appeal fails he may have to leave the country, though the Home Office said many factors would be discussed before that eventuality.



Why home is where the winning is



Vincent Hanna

PREJUDICES are to sports-watchers what lies are to politicians: an abomination before God and a present help in time of trouble. Prejudice sustains us through hard times. It convinces us that our team never loses, not really, not fair and square. Take away our blind prejudices and we might begin to lose our faith, and have a nervous breakdown.

But prejudice is a tower that needs to be nurtured. Let me introduce Dr Alan Nevill of John Moores University. He has done research to make a thousand prejudices bloom. Mind you, it took him a full season to find out what you and I, and Alan Ball, knew all along: that teams playing at home tend to have an advantage.

Dr Nevill looked at penalties and red cards. He found that the larger the home crowd, the better off were the home team. "In the Premiership, First Division and Scottish Premier Division," he told me, "70 per cent of the decisions went against the visitors. In the Scottish Second Division and the GM Vauxhall Conference, where there are few spectators, the decisions tend to go 50-50."

This may happen because away teams may be provoked into behaving recklessly, but also because referees may hear the noise and take the easy way out. Interestingly, the trend slows down when you reach the top sides in the Premiership. "They get the best referees in the country," said Nevill, "and everything is analysed on television."

Good news, eh? So lads, a quick rehearsal... all together then: "Hey ref! The department of Human Sciences at Liverpool John Moores University says they [point to home supporters] are exercising undue influence over you." That should even things up a bit when Partick Thistle next play Rangers.

LET us turn to Sunday's penalty incident. In the 38th minute of the Manchester derby, Giggs swung a corner from the left which cleared everyone in the penalty area. Michael Prosser, a City defender and German international, hugged Cantona. There was protest

neither from Eric nor the Stroud End. Alan Wilkie, standing 10 feet away, instantly gave a penalty, which Cantona duly converted.

Ball, City's manager, said later: "Would he have given it at the other end? I doubt it very very very much."

On Match of the Day they agreed. Jimmy Hill said that in penalty areas there is always a lot of bumping and pushing, and he did a sort of bossa nova in his chair.

Alan Hansen said it was a bad decision but he sat out the dance. On Sky Sports, Stuart Pearce supported the referee, and Justin Edinburgh thought the decision was harsh but not wrong.

We were left alone with our prejudices and an illustration of how television analysis is not always relevant. I sought the advice of David Elleray, Premiership referee and house master, who is not intimidated by Manchester Utd (he twice sent off Roy Keane). "I would not have been surprised to have made the same decision as Alan Wilkie," he told me. "There is a basic difference between pushing and shoving, and holding down a player."

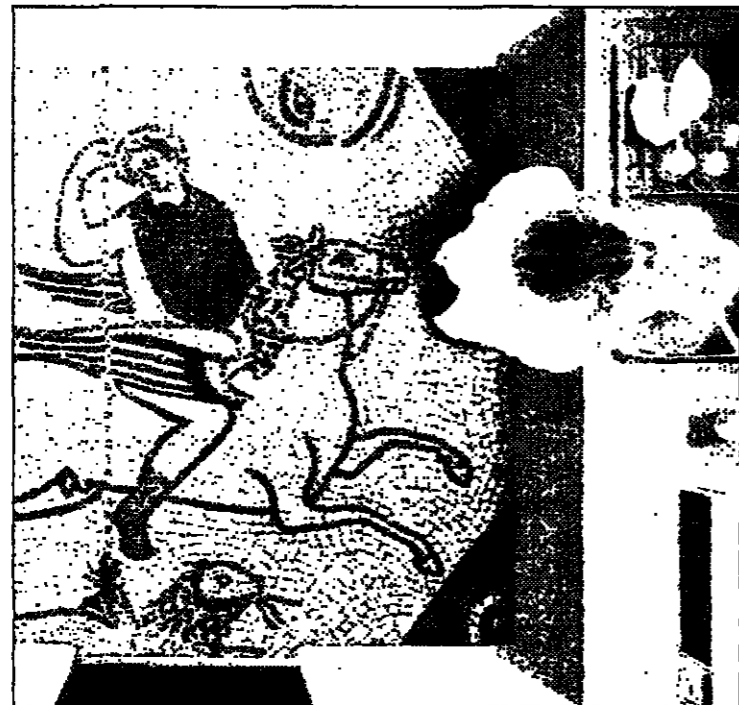
Would the game be improved, I asked, by having an instant appeal mechanism, such as exists in the NFL, and to which the referee might turn in time of trouble. After all, the Peter Clobessy stamping incident during the France-Ireland game would have escaped detection but for television.

"TV works with decisions of fact, not of judgement," said Elleray. "It can show if a ball has crossed the goal-line or if a player is offside. It cannot measure the degree of intent involved in a foul. Only a referee on the spot can do that."

ELLERAY can see television being used in big games, but not in smaller ones, preferably not me. Will have to explain to the crowd about the five minutes wait at crucial moments?

He reminded me that the FA has used video evidence against players who committed fouls but get away with it during the game — as West Ham's Julian Dicks will testify.

Well, I think there is a more effective way of settling these matters. The crowd could vote on any disputed decisions. True, this would put power in the hands of the stupid and the uninformed. But this system works perfectly well in the House of Commons. And yes, it would give the home side a big advantage. But according to Dr Nevill, that's what happens anyway.



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Dumitrescu... red light



Lamptey... green light

Dumitrescu v Lamptey

IF I LIC DUMITRESCU and Marc Hottiger are feeling particularly hard done by in having their work permits refused, they have every reason, writes Martin Thorpe.

Gaining permission to work in this country can be a curious affair. No one quite knows how the Ghanaian winger Nii Lamptey got his work permit renewed this summer, thus allowing him to move from Aston Villa to Coventry. He started only three games for Villa last season.

The Bulgarian international Boncho Guechev hardly played at all for Ipswich last season but was

able to get a work permit after his summer move to Luton because, it is understood, his wife got a job at the Bulgarian Embassy. As the spouse of an embassy employee he is allowed to work here.

But not even international fame necessarily saves a player. Earlier this month Mark Williams was the hero of South Africa, scoring both his country's goals in their African Nations' Cup final victory. But he has started only seven games so far this season for Wolves and is unlikely to have his work permit extended when the season ends.

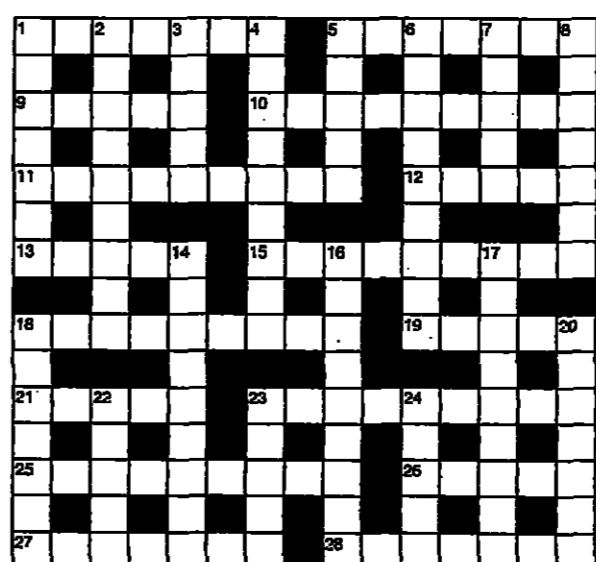
Four months ago, a 28-mile long oil slick killed thousands of sea birds. There was a muted outcry, but nothing was said about the 140 slicks found around Britain in the past four months.

Go2 page 10

All wrapped up... Asprilla, whose work permit came through this month, trains with Newcastle yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: OWEN HUMPHREYS

Guardian Crossword No 20,581

Set by Araucaria

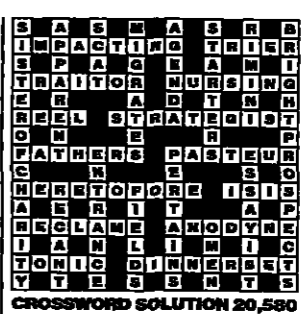


Across

- 1 19 that swells? (7)
- 5 19 to strike in flight? (7)
- 9 Airspeed divided by speed of sound when stationary? That's a tough one (5)
- 10 Wager with tote could be Bailey's (4-5)
- 11 Before 12's placed on list sent back to surgeon (one hopes) (9)
- 12 Bonus obtained from complex transaction (5)
- 13 See 19
- 15 Loose dancing nudes entertain ship's company (9)
- 18 Intervals where hydrogen by itself's about a foot (4-5)
- 19, 15, 6 down "I shall down", I call to the regulator in trembling fear (1,4,3,2,5)
- 21 19 on a cock (5)
- 23 Snip, a common complaint against witchcraft (4,5)

Down

- 1 19 or duck for false French saint (7)
- 2 Heady concoction of characters in charge of coal pit (9)
- 3 19 out of the top drawer in movement (5)
- 4 Pro-Tory shift adds unusual gain to poor rum (5,4)
- 5 See 19
- 6 Where penalties are convertible? Not far off (2,3,4)
- 7 The obsolete conscience of the double-hearted Eskimo (5)
- 8 19 gives protection around the fleet (7)
- 14 Time I left 23 down in front? Not likely! (3,5)



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- 16 Slim shape adapted for rope-making (5-4)
- 17 The power of 5 down, as opposed to black ice? (5,4)
- 18 19 the bride is given (7)
- 20 19 sees Henry's ship capsize? (7)
- 22 Syrian quadruped found before our time (5)
- 23 Range of daisies for a smoker? (5)
- 24 19 on loan? (5)

Solution tomorrow

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